Bengaluru Tuesday, March 24, 2026 Pages 16 Vol 79 No 82 ₹7

www.deccanherald.com Follow us on @deccanherald

DH

DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

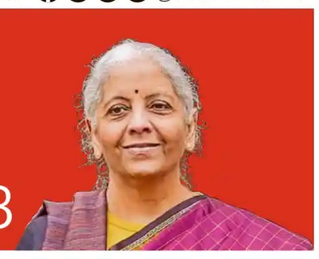
Alcaraz stunned by Korda

World No. 1 suffers shock early exit in Miami Open last 32

Page 16

Business

India proposes changes to companies law: Sitharaman P.13



World

2 dead after jet collides with vehicle at New York Airport P.12

Nation

EAM bats for removal of non-tariff barriers P.10

Nation

TN court convicts 9 cops for custodial death P.11

Trump extends Hormuz deadline, says US talking with 'Iran leader'

WAR FRONT: US Prez hints at deal even as Tehran denies talks with Washington

DUBAI/TEHRAN, AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump on Monday said the US was talking with a "respected" Iranian leader and claimed Tehran was eager for a deal to end the war — though Iranian officials denied there were negotiations. He also extended a deadline for Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz or face attacks on its power plants, saying it has an additional five days.

Trump's surprise announcement was short on detail about whom the US side had contacted, but he said it was "not the supreme leader", Mojtaba Khamenei.

He described the unidentified negotiator as "a top person" and "the most respected and the leader".

Trump also claimed that "regime change" was underway in Iran. He said unidentified Iranian officials reached out under pressure of his threat to attack power stations. "They called, I didn't call," he said. "They want to make a deal, and we are very willing to make a deal."

Trump announced on his Truth Social site that he was allowing five days for talks. But if talks don't produce results, he told reporters later, "we'll just keep bombing our little hearts out".

Iran's parliament speaker denied there have been any negotiations with the US. Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf wrote on X that "No negotiations have been held with the US, and fake news is used to manipulate the financial and oil markets and escape the quagmire in which the US and Israel are trapped".

However, Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei indicated that messages had been received from "some friendly countries indicating a US request for negotiations aimed at ending the war".

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Monday that he spoke with Trump, who saw a chance of reaching a deal with Iran. Trump believed there was a possibility of "leveraging the mighty achievements obtained by the IDF (Israel Defence Forces) and the US military, in order to realise the goals of the war in a deal," Netanyahu said.

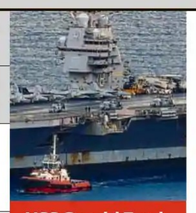
Trump's turnaround, which held out the possibility of resolving the war now in its fourth week, served to drive down oil prices and jolt stocks.

▸ Iran, Page 6
Trump okayed Iran op over Khamenei killing, Page 12
Gold drops sharply, Page 13

Emergency personnel work at the site of a strike on a residential building in Tehran. REUTERS

MONDAY'S DEVELOPMENTS

- Strong explosions heard in Tehran
- UN Lebanon peacekeeper HQ struck by a projectile
- 2 more Indian-flagged LPG tankers pass through Strait of Hormuz
- Israeli military confirms its own artillery fire killed an Israeli civilian on Sunday
- Crude prices fall after Trump's announcement that the US and Iran were negotiating



USS Gerald Ford, the world's largest aircraft carrier, which played a key role in the war, returns to a base in Crete

- Iran's defence council says it will mine "all access routes and communications lines in the Persian Gulf and coastal areas" if its coastlines or islands were attacked

"They (Iran) called, I didn't call. They want to make a deal, and we are very willing to make a deal..."

Donald Trump, US President

Rs 150-cr loss: B'luru hoteliers

The hotel industry in Bengaluru has suffered losses to the tune of Rs 150 crore in the last three weeks. Even if the situation eases with partial supply of commercial LPG cylinders, the industry may still see losses, the hoteliers' association said.
Details on Page 4

Medical device industry hit

The West Asia conflict has impacted India's medical device industry and domestic manufacturers have sought the Centre's help. The tensions have driven up input costs by nearly 50% for critical plastics and over 20% for packaging.
Details on Page 10

Conflict has created challenges for India: PM

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The "concerning situation" in West Asia has posed "unexpected challenges" for India's "economic and national security," given the country's large imports of crude oil and gas from the Gulf nations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday, even as he assured the nation that the government has enough food and strategic reserves to tide over the crisis.

"Our effort is to ensure that ships carrying essential goods, be it oil, gas, or fertiliser, reach India safely. We are in constant communication with all our global partners to ensure the safety of our maritime corridors", the prime minister informed the Lok Sabha in his first detailed intervention on war in the Persian Gulf that has now entered its fourth week.

India receives a large quantum of its strategic imports, including crude oil, gas, and fertilisers, through the Strait of Hormuz, held in choke hold by Iran since the start of the hostilities.

The war, Modi said, will have long-term implications for the world, including a "humanitarian crisis" for nearly 1 crore Indians who live and work in the Gulf nations.

More than 375,000 Indians, including 1,000 from Iran, have returned to India since last month.

▸ Modi, Page 6

Draft policy for responsible digital use

Focuses on a three-fold approach

1. Govt will form directives for schools to adhere to
2. Teachers will be trained for healthy use of technology
3. School will communicate with parents about digital well-being of their kids

- Every school to frame a 'digital use policy'
- Digital well-being and social media literacy will be part of curriculum
- Schools will have to form a 'digital wellness committee'
- Aimed at improving the digital well-being of kids studying in class 9, 10 & PUC

Govt policy aims responsible screen time for students

Health dept will train teachers to identify red flags

BENGALURU, DHNS

Aiming to promote responsible use of screens among students and to create awareness among parents and teachers on guiding children to limit their screen time, the state government has come up with a 'draft policy for responsible digital use among students'.

According to the policy, every school is expected to frame a 'digital use policy' and include digital well-being and social media literacy in their curriculum.

The health department will also train teachers to identify red flags such as attention and concentration issues, behavioral issues like loneliness, boredom, stress, and social isolation associated with technology use. The schools will also have to form a 'digital wellness committee'.

The programme is aimed at improving the digital well-being of children studying in class 9, class 10 and PUC (or 11th and 12th standards). The policy has been drafted by the Department of Health and Family Welfare along with Karnataka State Mental Health Authority (KSMHA), Department of Education, and National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (Nimhans).

The policy has been framed considering rising mental health issues among students due to digital gadget usage.

▸ Draft policy, Page 6

Govt working on phone policy

The Karnataka government is working out a policy to regulate the use of mobile phones and social media by children below the age of 16 and the same will be presented during the next session of the legislature, Minister for School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa told the Legislative Council.
Details on Page 5

Four killed as pvt bus hits railing

BENGALURU, DHNS: Four persons, including two from Bengaluru, were killed and two others sustained grievous injuries when a private bus crashed into a roadside railing near Puttappandoddi on the Bengaluru-Mysuru expressway in the early hours of Monday.

According to Channapatna Traffic Police, the accident occurred around 4 am. The bus was on its way from Kozhikode in Kerala to Bengaluru. Preliminary investigations suggested that the driver may have dozed off.
Details on Page 2

DH Political Theatre

Cong acts as B-team for communal forces: Vijayan

Dubbing the Congress a "B-team of communal forces", Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the CPM cannot have any truck with a party that lacks ideological moorings to challenge the RSS locally. In an interview with *DH's* **Arjun Raghunath,** the veteran Left leader made it clear that any collaboration with the Congress within the I.N.D.I.A bloc at the national level is limited to resisting the BJP's authoritarianism.

Interview on page 7

SC raps CBI, ED for 'reluctance' in probing Anil Ambani firms

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Monday voiced concern over the "reluctance" shown by CBI and ED in probing the alleged large-scale banking fraud involving Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group and its firms, and directed them to conduct a "fair, dispassionate, transparent, and time-bound" investigation into the matter.

A bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi sought a fresh status report and directed all concerned financial institutions to "render full cooperation to the ED".

Taking up a PIL filed by former bureaucrat E A S Sarma seeking a court-monitored investigation into alleged loan frauds exceeding Rs 40,000 crore by Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group (ADAG) firms, the bench permitted the central agencies to approach it in case there is any reluctance on the part of other government bodies in extending cooperation.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the agencies, stated that an SIT, in pursuance of an earlier order, had been constituted comprising senior ED officers and experts from the banking sector.

▸ Anil Ambani, Page 6

HONOURING THE BRAVE

Home Guard personnel clean dust from a wall painting of freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru on the 'Shaheed Diwas', or Martyrs' Day, in Gurugram on Monday. PTI

4 killed in cold storage blast in Prayagraj

LUCKNOW, DHNS: At least four labourers were killed and dozens more were feared trapped under the rubble after a portion of a cold storage facility collapsed, allegedly following a blast in an ammonia gas tank, in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj district on Monday. The death toll could rise as six labourers were reported to be in critical condition. The deceased were said to be residents of Bihar.
Details on Page 10

Quickly

Garbage collection hit in Bengaluru

Door-to-door collection of garbage came to a halt in at least 50 wards in Bengaluru on Monday after the auto tipper drivers and loaders went on a mass leave in protest against the Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Ltd (BSWML) over delayed salaries and a new rule on waste segregation.
Details on Page 2

Women's quota: Shah meets Oppn, NDA leaders

In a bid to build a broad consensus for its move to amend the Women's Reservation Bill and delink it from the upcoming delimitation process, Amit Shah on Monday met the Opposition parties. Later, he also held discussions with NDA partners.
Details on Page 10

Colombian military aircraft crashes, 80 dead

A Colombian military plane carrying 125 troops and crew crashed on Monday, with as many as 80 people aboard feared dead. The Hercules aircraft went down shortly after departure from Puerto Leguizamo, near the southern border with Ecuador.
Details on Page 12

Govt to provide 10,000 AC E-buses

The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Monday informed the Rajya Sabha that 10,000 air-conditioned electric buses will be provided to 116 cities across 26 states and Union Territories by the end of 2027.
Details on Page 10

Meloni seen narrowly losing justice referendum

Exit polls on Monday suggested Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni had narrowly lost a referendum on her flagship reform of the judicial system, dealing a potential blow to the ruling coalition ahead of next year's general election.
Details on Page 12

POLLUTION PAIN

Blackened & sickened: Koppal village gasps for breath

Worsening crisis

- Hirebaganal is surrounded by **24 large** red category industries within a **5-km radius**
- Red category industries are those with a high pollution index. Of the **24, 13 are sponge-iron units** known for pollution
- Cases of **asthma**, respiratory illness and other **chronic health problems** due to compromised immunity are rising due to pollution
- According to an estimate, **crop yields** in these villages have **fallen by around 40% as t**he black dust prevents photosynthesis

A Hirebaganal resident shows a hand covered in black dust; leaves coated with a dark layer. DH PHOTOS/ ANITHA PAILOOR

ANITHA PAILOOR
HIREBAGANAL (KOPPAL), DHNS

The first thing students at the government high school in Hirebaganal village do on entering the classroom is to wipe the fine layer of black soot off their desks that was cleaned hours earlier by the housekeeping staff.

It doesn't take long to spot the culprit: smoke from a large red category industry.

The black soot is everywhere in the village: it coats the livestock and can be found on crops; it is also in local villagers' lungs and eyes, going by the complaints of cough, burning eyes. Even the leaves no longer appear green in Hirebaganal.

"We don't know how this smoke and dust will affect our lungs," says Radhika, a Class 9 student.

Located in Koppal district, Hirebaganal is surrounded by 24 large red category industries within a five-kilometre radius and has been scarred by toxic emissions for over a decade. Red category industries are those with a high pollution index. Of the 24, 13 are sponge-iron units known for heavy pollution.

FROM THE GROUND

Residents report rising cases of asthma, respiratory illness and other chronic health problems due to compromised immunity.

"When there are industries sitting on our chest, how can we live, how can we farm?" Gavisiddamma Palleda (55) says, echoing the concerns of Hirebaganal and at least 10 other villages affected by polluting industries. Agriculture and livestock are also bearing the brunt, while residents watch helplessly the slow decay of their village.

Agriculture and horticulture departments estimate that crop yields in these villages have fallen by around 40% as the black dust prevents photosynthesis, though locals claim the losses are far greater. Once known as the vegetable bowl of Koppal, this cluster of villages has been forced to shift to maize or mangoes, as vegetables either fail or there are no buyers for harvest coated in black soot.

▸ Koppal village, Page 4

HIGHWAY TRAGEDY

Bus crashes into railing on B'luru–Mysuru Expressway, 4 dead

The accident spot near Puttappanadoddi on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway on Monday.

Driver of the Kozhikode–Bengaluru bus is suspected to have dozed off at the wheel

BENGALURU, DHNS

Four people were killed and two sustained serious injuries when a private bus crashed into a roadside railing near Puttappanadoddi on the Bengaluru-Mysuru expressway early Monday.

The deceased have been identified as Mohammed Farhan (22) from Kozhikode, Kerala; Sulfi Rafeez (45) from Mahe, Puducherry; and Bengaluru residents Rashid (45) from Kalasipalya and Shakeer (27) from Annepalya in Adugodi. The injured, Abdul and Alen from Kannur, Kerala, are receiving treatment at a private hospital.

According to Channapatna Traffic Police, the accident occurred around 4 am. The bus (KA 01 AR 2024), belonging to PK Travels, was en route from Kozhikode to Bengaluru.

Preliminary investigations suggest that the driver, Riyaz, may have dozed off behind the wheel. "The bus was travelling at high speed," a senior police officer said. "The driver appears to have steered sharply to the left in a state of drowsiness, causing the vehicle to hit the metal railing separating the main highway from the service road."

The impact was so severe that the bus reportedly scraped against the iron fencing for nearly 100 metres.

The metal poles and rods of the guardrail pierced the left side of the bus, where the four victims were seated. They reportedly died on the spot due to the impact.

At the time of the accident, there were 43 people on board: 36 passengers and seven crew members.

District Superintendent of Police R Srinivas Gowda and DySP KC Giri visited the spot.

Channapatna Traffic Police have taken Riyaz into custody and registered a case of negligent driving.

Drunk triple riders booked after BTM Road stunt goes viral

A rider holding a beer bottle and a pillion openly drinking and gesturing at the public highlighted a blatant disregard for the law.

BENGALURU, DHNS: Mico Layout Traffic Police have registered a criminal case against a group of youths caught on camera triple riding and consuming alcohol on BTM Road on Sunday.

The action followed a viral post on X showing three individuals on a two-wheeler weaving through traffic without helmets.

In a blatant display of lawlessness, one rider was seen holding a beer bottle, while the pillion rider openly drank and gestured at the public.

The post — titled "License to Kill?" — sparked widespread outrage, with citizens calling for strict action against such reckless behaviour.

Responding to the post, the Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) traced the vehicle's registration details and identified the accused. "We have traced the vehicle and the accused persons and registered a criminal case at the Mico Layout traffic police station."

Another stunt

Meanwhile, a similar incident from the city has also gone viral on social media, showing three individuals on a scooter (KA03 KM 4481) triple riding without helmets, driving on the wrong side, and abusing other motorists.

The video that went viral shows triple riders without helmets, drinking and weaving through traffic.

ELCITA declares itself public authority, will respond to RTI queries

BENGALURU, DHNS: Declaring itself a "public authority", the Electronics City Industrial Township Authority (ELCITA) has appointed a public information officer, assistant PIO and first appellate authority, complying with orders from the Karnataka State Information Commission, issued in January.

The authority also informed the commission of its compliance.

The move allows citizens to seek information from ELCITA under the Right to Information Act, 2005. An office has been set up to receive, process and handle applications from the public.

In January, the commission ruled that ELCITA is both a state and a public authority under Section 2 (H) of the RTI Act, 2005.

The orders were issued by State Information Commissioners Rajashekara S and Rudranna Harthikote on two occasions while hearing pleas of RTI applicants whose requests for information from ELCITA were rejected.

On both occasions, the commission directed ELCITA to provide information and instructed officials of different departments not to issue letters claiming exemption from the RTI Act, stating it amounts to violation of the essence of the Act.

Waste collection hit in 50 wards as workers go on mass leave

As many as 35 FIRs registered against garbage contractors

BENGALURU, DHNS

Door-to-door collection of garbage came to a halt in at least 50 wards on Monday after auto tipper drivers and loaders went on mass leave, protesting against Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Ltd (BSWML) over delayed salaries and a new rule on waste segregation.

While the BSWML insisted on improving segregation of waste at source, contractors argued that segregation is the responsibility of the waste producer, not the collector.

Garbage autos stand in line, skipping household collection on Monday. DH PHOTO

BSWML CEO Karee Gowda, who is on election duty in West Bengal, said the disruption in garbage collection was limited to about 40 to 50 wards, while most of the city did not face any problem.

"There was a delay in clearing payments. The chief commissioner has instructed us to pay the salaries of the last four months," he said. "The BSWML will not go back on the order of segregating waste at source."

"I will call a meeting of contractors on Thursday when I am back in the city," he said. "The SWM rule mandates segregation of waste."

It is learnt that marshals have registered police complaints against garbage contractors who have not collected waste in some wards under the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA).

Authorities have registered 35 FIRs against garbage contractors.

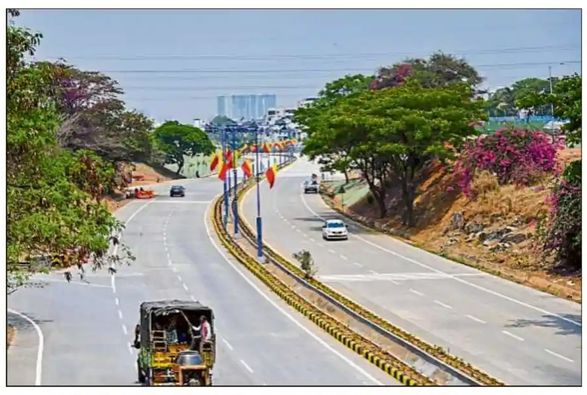
SN Balasubramanian, president of the BBMP Garbage Contractors' Association, said the responsibility of segregating waste lies with the waste producer.

"The BSWML is asking our auto drivers and loaders to ensure segregation of waste. How can we segregate the waste? Does it not amount to violation of the Manual Scavengers Act?" he asked. He said the BSWML is issuing new orders every week without consulting the people handling waste on the ground.

BSWML officials said tender conditions require contractors to collect only segregated waste. If the waste is mixed, responsibility is fixed on the contractor when it reaches the transfer station.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Contractors' view	BSWML's take
• Segregation is the waste producer's responsibility.	• Segregation at source is mandatory.
• Drivers cannot segregate mixed waste.	• Contractors must collect only segregated waste.
• New rules without consultation.	• Rule as per SWM guidelines.
• Delayed salaries (up to 4 months).	• 35 FIRs filed.



The four-lane road connects Deepanjali Nagar to Hosakerehalli, Banashankari 6th Stage, Kanakapura Road and Challaghatta, and is expected to cut travel time to these areas by nearly half. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

1.5-km NICE Road stretch opened for trial run

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

The newly built 1.5-km stretch of the Nandi Infrastructure Corridor Enterprises (NICE) Road from Deepanjali Nagar Junction on Mysore Road has been opened for a trial run.

The four-lane road connects Deepanjali Nagar to Hosakerehalli, Banashankari 6th Stage, Kanakapura Road and Challaghatta, and is expected to cut travel time to these areas by nearly half.

The link to Challaghatta will particularly benefit travellers heading towards Mysuru by reducing the need to enter the city.

During non-peak hours, a *DH* reporter travelled from the Hosakerehalli toll gate to Deepanjali Nagar via NICE Road and compared it with the usual route through Nayandahalli. The NICE stretch reduced travel time to less than half.

Speaking to *DH*, Ashok Kheny, Managing Director of NICE, said, "We have opened both sides of the road for trial runs by the traffic police. We are awaiting a date from the state government for the formal inauguration."

However, commuters heading towards Chord Road or Mysore Road (towards Majestic) will have to take a U-turn at BHEL Junction, merging with Mysore Road and BHEL Junction traffic.

Samarth Nayak, a resident of Hosakerehalli who travels to Richmond Town for work, said, "I usually take Mysore Road and have to navigate traffic at BHEL Junction and Nayandahalli, which takes about 20 minutes. On NICE Road, it takes just five to six minutes."

Jeevan K, a resident of Banashankari 6th Stage, said, "I tried the road and it definitely saves time, but the Rs 75 one-way toll is expensive for daily use. It may be useful during emergencies or when there is an urgency."

A senior police officer said, "We expect traffic congestion to reduce by about 25%. However, regular commuters may hesitate to use it due to the toll cost."

Kheny added that daily passes for residents may be introduced, if required.

North Corporation officials inspect the work on Monday.

North Corp officials inspect Jakkur railway bridge work

BENGALURU, DHNS: Senior officials of the Bengaluru North City Corporation on Monday inspected the ongoing construction of the railway bridge at Jakkur.

Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar instructed engineers to complete the project by April 20.

Status check

During the inspection, officials reviewed the progress of the work, assessed pending tasks, and examined technical challenges at the site.

Observing that the project had not been completed within the stipulated timeline, the commissioner expressed strong displeasure over the delay and warned that a penalty would be imposed on the contractor if the work was not completed within the deadline.

During the inspection, Joint Commissioner Mohammed Naeem Momin and Chief Engineer Raghavendra Prasad were present.

Corporations to seize habitual tax defaulters' properties

BENGALURU, DHNS

The city's five municipal corporations have decided to take over properties of chronic tax defaulters as a last resort to prompt owners to clear their dues.

The decision, which comes ahead of the closure of the financial year, was taken after authorities found little success in auctioning defaulting properties during the public auction. This includes residential and commercial buildings.

In a press note, Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) Special Commissioner Munish Moudgil said the corporations have been advised to purchase defaulted properties as an exceptional case, after exhausting all prescribed recovery measures and when auctions fail repeatedly.

Munish Moudgil

The GBA has instructed the corporations to give property owners multiple chances to clear their dues: first by issuing a demand notice, second by passing an attachment order, and finally through public auction. When these three steps are unsuccessful, the corporation is authorised to purchase the property at upset price.

"The property will be deemed sold to the city corporation at the pre-determined upset price linked to the guidance value. From the sale proceeds, all outstanding property tax dues, including penalties, interest, and administrative expenses, will be fully recovered. Any surplus amount will be refunded to the original khatedar (property owner) through a bank transfer, ensuring fairness and transparency," the press note read.

The property will vest with the city corporation free of encumbrances, and ownership records will be updated accordingly.

"Even at this stage, the defaulter is provided a final one-month window to clear all dues with applicable interest, upon which the takeover order will be withdrawn and the property restored," the GBA has stated.

CCB arrests couple in fake govt job scam

BENGALURU, DHNS: A couple has been arrested by the Central Crime Branch (CCB) for cheating people aspiring for government jobs.

Jason D'Souza, 39, and his 36-year-old wife Lavina are suspected to have cheated about 100 aspirants by promising them central or state government employment.

The CCB's investigation revealed that the couple leveraged the network they built while running a small business to spread the word that they could help get government jobs.

CCB officials said they took anywhere between Rs 2 lakh to Rs 15 lakh to "process the application and for other formalities".

Though reports claimed that the victims were cheated of around Rs 25 crore, officials said the investigation is still underway to ascertain the exact extent of the scam. They agreed that the amount swindled could be several crores, given the number of victims.

A complaint filed at the Jnanabharathi police station on December 8 brought the couple under the police scanner. It was alleged that the couple and a few others took Rs 50 lakh and other necessary documents and failed to deliver on the promise.

Wider probe

Officials said similar cases have been registered in other city police stations and elsewhere in the state. The probe is going on as more victims are expected to come forward.

Woman's body found behind bus station; murder suspected

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 46-year-old woman, who was found dead in Kengeri on Monday, has been suspected to have been murdered, police said.

The body of Kempamma, a resident of Mahadeshawara Layout, was found in a heap of trash behind a bus station near Kengeri Main Road.

On being alerted by passersby, a police team along with Scene of Crime Officers arrived to examine the body. The body was moved for further legal proceedings, including an autopsy.

A deep wound on the head has raised suspicion among police that the woman could have been murdered elsewhere and her body had been dumped later behind the bus station.

Police said a team is already on the case, scouring CCTV footage and gathering other technical evidence to trace the suspects. Kempamma's family has also been intimated, police added.

PRICE PINCH

City commuters hit by steep auto fares during festive weekend

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

Over the long festive weekend, commuters in the city complained of inflated auto fares on and off ride aggregator platforms.

A commuter travelling from Hennur to RR Nagar on Sunday evening noticed nearly double the fares on ride aggregator platforms.

"The ride usually costs Rs 350 to Rs 400," Shreya, an RR Nagar resident, said. "But on Sunday, all aggregator platforms were displaying fares of about Rs 650 and above. Rapido was the highest at Rs 687. I ended up taking a bike taxi for Rs 255, which was Rs 55 more than the usual."

Another commuter travelling from MG Road to Indiranagar on Saturday afternoon reported higher than normal fares on Uber and Rapido, excluding tips.

> Over the last few days, we observed temporary, automated fare variations in select areas, driven by a short-term dip in captain availability during the festive season of Ugadi and Eid. As the captains' availability improves and operations normalise, fares stabilised to their regular levels.
> — Rapido spokesperson

On Monday morning, an auto ride from RT Nagar to MG Road was priced at Rs 188 to Rs 205 on Rapido, Rs 185 on Uber, and Rs 160 on Ola, compared to the regular fare of Rs 150.

"Noticing the higher fares on aggregator platforms, I took an auto from Malleswaram to Vasant Nagar on Saturday. The drivers asked for Rs 200 to Rs 250, while it costs less than Rs 100. They blamed it on the higher fuel costs," said Sushmita Shankar, an undergraduate student.

Multiple commuters reported similar experiences while attempting to hail an auto over the past week.

"As gas prices increase, it is obvious that autos which run on LPG will ask for a higher fare," said general secretary of Auto Rickshaw Drivers Union (ARDU) D Rudramurthy, adding that some CNG auto drivers might even be using this excuse to charge more.

Responding to *DH*'s queries, a Rapido spokesperson attributed the volatile fares to shortage of drivers during the weekend.

"Over the last few days, we observed temporary, automated fare variations in select areas, driven by a short-term dip in captain availability during the festive season of Ugadi and Eid," the spokesperson said.

The fare hike was purely situational, designed to ensure continued services, the spokesperson added, insisting that it did not indicate any permanent pricing changes.

"As the captains' availability improves and operations normalise, fares stabilised to their regular levels," the Rapido spokesperson said.

Uber did not respond to our queries.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Youth for Understanding of Geoscience and Action (YUGA): NS Bosaraju, Shailesh Nayak, BK Pavitra, Ashok M Raichur, Srinivasulu, NL Rajesh, AH Rajasab, Ashok S Alur; 'Prayog', Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan; from 10 am.

World Water Day: Subhasish Tripathi, M Kesavamurthy, Lakshman Nandagiri, Madhava, UN Kempaiah, AV Sriram; Visvesvaraya University, Department of Civil Engineering, Jnanabharathi UVCE; 10.30 am onwards.

K.V. Shankaragowda Datti Lecture: Chaired by Appareddy Harish; Lecture on 'Kannada Literature and Law'; JB Thammanna, HG Balagopal, Swapna N, BS Vijaya; Vivekananda Law College, Gayatrinagar; 10.30 am.

International Women's Day Celebrations: Kittur Rani Chennamma Award Presentation; Siddaramaiah, Shobha Karandlaje, DK Shivakumar, Lakshmi R Hebbalkar, Uday B Garudachar; Women and Child Development Department; Ravindra Kalakshetra; 11 am.

International Women's Day & Ugadi Celebrations: K Mohandev Alva, SG Sushilamma, Reenasuvarna; Sputri Mahila Samaj, Keerthi Mahila Samaj; Hotel Rajatadri Palace; 11 am.

'Youth in the Labor Market: Paths to Earning from Learning' Report Release: Rosha Abraham; Azim Premji University; Bangalore International Centre (BIC), Domlur; 5.30 pm.

'Saketha Samrajni': Organised by Kodandarama Kripaposhitha Yakshagana Mandali, Hanumagiri; Ravindra Kalakshetra, JC Road; 6.30 pm onwards.

CULTURAL

Adamya Rangotsava–Nankampani Drama Performance: Written by TP Kailasam, music: V Manohar, direction: Ritwik Simha, production: Jaslin Ritwik Simha; Adamya Ranga Sanskriti Trust; Sansa Bayalu Ranga Mandira, Ravindra Kalakshetra, JC Road; 6.30 pm.

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Generally cloudy sky

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	33.0°C
Minimum	22.0°C
Rainfall	0.8mm
Humidity	65%
Sunset (Mar 24)	6:31 pm
Sunrise (Mar 25)	6:22 am
Moonrise	9:29 am
Moonset	10:50 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

Commission moots 'Tuluvas Bhavan' in M'luru, Udupi & B'luru

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Karnataka State Policy & Planning Commission has submitted a proposal to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on establishing 'Tuluvas Bhavan' in Mangaluru, Udupi and Bengaluru, aimed at preserving and promoting the rich cultural and socio-economic heritage of the Tuluva community.

The proposal envisions the Bhavan as a multi-functional institutional network dedicated to cultural preservation, education, entrepreneurship and community engagement. A primary centre is proposed in Mangaluru as a coastal heritage hub, with satellite centres in Udupi focusing on research and language promotion, and Bengaluru serving as an urban hub for networking, advocacy and diaspora engagement.

"It is designed to address long-pending aspirations of the Tulu-speaking community while aligning with broader development goals of the state. It is to create an institution that preserves Tulu language, Yakshagana and folk traditions, while opening avenues for youth through skill development, research and entrepreneurship," Commission member S Mohanadass Hegde said.

Toll rates on highways set to go up from April 1

Inflation-linked hike to push up charges by 3-5%

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

Vehicle users will be paying higher toll charges with toll rates across the state set to go up by 3-5% from April 1 as part of an inflation-linked annual hike. The revised fares are expected to be notified in the coming days.

The charges are increased in line with the Wholesale Price Index (WPI), a senior official from the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) told *DH*. "This will apply to almost all the toll plazas in the state. Only 10-odd toll plazas will see a price hike later in the year on September 1. The toll charges are increased by rounding off the increase in the WPI. For example, if there is an increase of Rs 2.5 or more, it will be rounded off to Rs 5," he elaborated.

Some of the toll plazas where the hike will be reflected include Kaniminike and Sheshagirihalli (Bengaluru-Mysuru), Bagepalli (Bengaluru-Hyderabad), Sadahalli (Bengaluru Airport road), Nangli (Bengaluru-Tirupati), and Hulikunte and Nalluru Devanahalli (Satellite Town Ring Road).

The revision in the fee has been carried out in accordance with the provisions of the National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008, said K B Jayakumar, Project Director, NHAI.

"Toll charges at all public-funded plazas will be increased in accordance with the 2008 Fee Rules. This happens at the start of every financial year. In the remaining Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) toll plazas, where operations began before 2008, the 1997 Fee Rules are applicable, and fare changes can take place during the rest of the financial year," he told *DH*, adding that a maximum hike of 5% is to be expected.

The Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway has seen multiple toll revisions since its inauguration in 2023.

The Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway has seen multiple toll revisions since its inauguration in 2023. DH FILE PHOTO

"The expressway is one of the most expensive roads. As I travel to Mysuru almost every month for work, I feel a pinch every time the toll is hiked. A toll charge of Rs 180 for one-way travel is already quite high," quipped Jayanth Reddy, a Whitefield resident. "From Bengaluru, the tolls especially impact passengers travelling to Kerala. We pass on the entire toll charge onto the customers, and currently it's already between Rs 2,000 and Rs 3,000 for a road trip," added Santosh, who runs a travel agency.

Annual pass expensive too

On Sunday, the NHAI released a notification stating that the rate of its annual pass will be increased by Rs 75 for 2026-27, bringing the rate to Rs 3,075. It will be effective from April 1.

The annual pass facility was launched on August 15, 2025 to provide financial relief to commuters using national highways on a regular basis. It eliminates the need to frequently recharge FASTag through a one-time fee payment for one-year validity or 200 toll plaza crossings. The pass is applicable for all non-commercial vehicles with a valid FASTag.

Sewage into lakes: Minister calls for legal action against officers

BENGALURU, DHNS: Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda on Monday called for legal action against officials who were failing to stop the discharge of sewage into lakes, which he said was giving a bad name to the KC Valley project.

Gowda, along with Minor Irrigation Minister N S Boseraju, Food & Civil Supplies Minister K H Muniyappa and Higher Education Minister Dr M C Sudhakar, held a meeting with scientists from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and other officials.

The meeting was held after Mulbagal JD(S) MLA Samruddhi Manjunath, on March 10, charged in the Assembly that contaminated water was being supplied under the KC Valley project of treating Bengaluru's sewage to fill up tanks in Kolar and Chikkaballapur districts.

"Village wastewater is being let into clean lake water, contaminating it. In Chikkaballapur, city sewage is being directly discharged into lakes. Mistakes by municipal officials are giving the KC Valley project a bad name, unnecessarily tarnishing it," Gowda said during the meeting, according to a statement from his office.

Gowda criticised municipal authorities for lacking the capability to maintain water quality. "Officials were instructed to coordinate with BWSSB to treat local sewage and then release it into lakes through a proper plan," the statement said.

The minister asked officials to check fish health and meat quality every six months. He also proposed that IISc continue its research for the next 5-10 years.

"IISc scientists have confirmed that the quality of treated water under the KC Valley, HN Valley and Vrushabhavati Valley is good," Boseraju said. "There's no need for citizens to panic."

According to Gowda, the KC Valley project has improved groundwater levels in and around Kolar. "Earlier, water was not available even at 1,800 feet. Now, water is available at 50–100 feet in the district," the statement from his office said.

"Multiple studies conducted by IISc found no trace of metals in the water or groundwater. Clean water is available without odor or colour. Allegations that nitrogen levels in the soil have increased are false. Crops such as fenugreek, cucumber, beetroot, tomato, and flowers are being cultivated," he said.

88% tuberculosis patients recovered in 2024, says health minister

BENGALURU, DHNS: The data from the Health and Family Welfare department shows that about 88% of tuberculosis patients in Karnataka recovered in 2024 while 75,318 new cases were detected in 2025.

"The increasing number of recoveries is a good sign", said Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao in Bengaluru on Monday.

Districts such as Raichur, Dharwad, Ballari, Koppal, and Yadgir account for nearly 20% of the state's total TB burden, he added. The government aims to eliminate a disease that has affected humanity for centuries. Under the ambitious Gruha Arogya Yojana, health workers collect information on TB symptoms during door-to-door visits. Efforts are on at the panchayat level to create widespread awareness, added the minister.

He said that ASHA workers are continuously engaging with communities to identify symptoms and spread awareness. An inter-departmental coordination committee has been formed, and officials have already been directed to take necessary action.

A "TB-Free Gram Panchayat" campaign is being implemented, advanced laboratories have been established, and modern diagnostic technologies have been deployed for accurate detection, he said. One State TB Training and Demonstration Centre, 32 District TB centres, 24 TB units, 1,893 designated microscopy centers, 166 CB-NAAT testing labs and 475 TruNAAT machines have already been set up in the state.

CCTV cameras to be installed in 20k PDS shops

BENGALURU, DHNS: Food and Civil Supplies Minister K H Muniyappa on Monday informed the Legislative Council that a tender process has been initiated on installation of CCTVs in 20,000 public distribution shops and GPS in vehicles transporting food grains under the PDS system.

Replying to the question by JD(S) MLC T A Sharavana, the minister said that a command and control centre will be established in Bengaluru soon to monitor the activities at public distribution shops to prevent leakage and diversion of food grains from PDS to black market.

CID to probe charges against Moodbidri police inspector: HM

Police officer faces allegations of harassment, atrocity

BENGALURU, DHNS

Home Minister G Parameshwara on Monday said that the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) will probe the allegations of atrocities and harassment against women by a now-suspended police inspector of Dakshina Kannada.

After the allegations of misbehaviour surfaced, Moodbidri Police Inspector P G Sandesh, on March 17, was placed under suspension pending inquiry by Mangaluru City Police Commissioner Sudheer Kumar Reddy C H.

The suspension was ordered following a preliminary inquiry by the Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) of the North Sub-Division, Mangaluru.

Speaking to reporters, Parameshwara said that the Chairperson of the Karnataka State Commission for Women, Nagalakshmi Chowdhary, visited the victim and later briefed him on various issues related to it.

"Against this backdrop, I have instructed the DG&IGP to hand over the case to the CID for investigation," he said.

"Immediate action was taken by suspending the Moodbidri police inspector after the allegations surfaced. Instructions have been given to submit a report and they will provide it. After hearing about many more related issues, the case has been handed over to the CID because further investigation is required. The truth will come out after the investigation," he added.

The home minister also said that if there are more victims, it will be known during the probe.

Meanwhile, Venur police in Dakshina Kannada district registered a rape case against Sandesh following a complaint on Saturday by the principal of a college in Belthangady taluk, accusing the police officer of sexually assaulting her between 2020 and 2023.

Sources in the Dakshina Kannada police have confirmed that the inquiry in the case was formally handed over to the CID on Monday.

Bill seeks to prevent transfer of govt teachers to non-teaching posts

Teachers in KK to serve for 10 yrs before seeking out of region transfer

SUJAY B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

The government is introducing a bill to prevent the transfer of government teachers to non-teaching posts.

"Transfer from teaching cadre to non-teaching cadre is expressly prohibited," the Karnataka State Civil Services (Regulation of Transfer of Teachers) (Amendment) Bill, 2026, says.

The bill has been drafted by the School Education and Literacy Department, and may be tabled in the ongoing session of the Legislature. Amending the 2020 Act, it refers to "critical posts," which include all teaching posts in government education institutions of the department. The proposed legislation notes that all transfers shall first be to critical posts, and to other posts only when critical posts are unavailable.

The critical posts have been divided into categories 1, 2 and 3. Category 1 includes posts other than the head masters (HMs) and vice-principals in Karnataka Public Schools, Adarsha Vidyalaya and PM SHRI schools.

Category 2 includes posts other than HMs and vice-principals in all other schools and government PU colleges exceeding 250 students or as per the enrolment threshold notified by the government from time to time. Category 3 includes HMs and vice-principals in categories 1 and 2.

The bill has retained provisions from the 2020 Amendment, such as a teacher serving for a minimum of 3 years in a school before seeking transfer, zonal transfers to achieve transfer of teachers across zones and so on. While opting for transfers to teaching posts in District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), College of Teacher Education (CTE) that are outside the counselling process, a teacher must have served continuously in same school for 10 years.

Exemptions and priorities

In a bid to retain more teachers in the Kalyana Karnataka (KK) region, the bill mandates a minimum service of 10 years for teachers in Kalyana Karnataka region before they seek a transfer out of the region.

It extends exemptions from rationalisation, zonal transfers and priority for request transfers to pregnant teachers and female teachers whose children are aged less than five years.

A source in the school education and literacy department said the endeavour intends to provide a supportive environment for female teachers at home to nurture their children.

"Or else, even after teachers return from maternity/childcare leave and are eager to work, logistical conditions will push them to take leave. Motherhood should not push them to choose between career and family life," the source added.

Shift Deendayal Upadhyaya lecture series venue, KSOU told

Minister says Varsities can't host events for pvt organisations

BENGALURU, DHNS

Minister for Higher Education Dr M C Sudhakar on Monday informed the Legislative Council that the state government would not allow Karnataka State Open University (KSOU) to host a lecture series organised to mark 60 years of the late politician Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's 'Ekatma Manav Darshan' series of lectures.

The three-day event starting March 25 titled 'Ekatma Manav Darshan/ Bharat's Worldview' is being organised by Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation and Praja Pravah, with Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan set to flag off proceedings. Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot too has been invited for the event.

Congress MLC Ramesh Babu sought answers on the use of the KSOU premises for the event, and in his reply, Sudhakar said that instructions had been given to the varsity authorities to shift the venue for the lecture series elsewhere. There is violation of protocol given that no representative of the state government, including the Pro-Chancellor has been invited to the event wherein a Union Minister is in attendance," Sudhakar said.

Other Congress MLCs too voiced their disappointment with KSOU for allowing the campus to host an event organised by a private outfit, and demanded action against the officials responsible.

Sudhakar reassured the Council that state-run universities could not host events for private organisations. "They can rent out space but cannot host the event. I learnt about this event only on Sunday afternoon, and when I spoke to the KSOU Vice-Chancellor, he claimed to be unaware of it. But I learnt that he was the chairman of the reception committee after seeing the event's brochure," the minister said.

Notice to VC

The Department of Higher Education on Monday issued a show-cause notice to KSOU Vice-Chancellor Sharanappa Halse seeking a written explanation on the varsity's decision to allow the lecture series.

KARNATAKA REDDYJANA SANGHA
No.1, Mahayogi Vemana Road, 3rd Block, Koramangala, Bangalore-34.

TENDER NOTICE

Quotations are invited from experienced contractors for supply External trench civil works and External Road works for KRJS Medical College, and Research Center building at Kasavanahalli of KRJS Group of Institutions.

Cost : **Rs.4.50 Crores for Trench Civil Works.**
Rs. 2.25 Crores for Road works.

Sealed quotations are to be submit within 07 days of this publication.

For more details, Visit our website
www.reddyjanasangha.org or
Contact: **080-25534194** or **8880228966, 9035244612**

Sd/- **President** Sd/- **General Secretary**

12th ANNIVERSARY
aanvii HEARING
Spark effortless conversations
even in the most difficult environment
Try the New Motion Charge&Go IX
65
hours
battery runtime
Home Visits Available*
4 Years Warranty*
1000 Days Damage Protection*
No Cost EMI*
Our Services
Free Hearing Aid Trial*
Repairs & Services
Accessories
Why Choose Us
3,50,000+ Trusted Customers
5,50,000+ Ears Under Our Care
86 Clinics Pan India
FREE HEARING TEST & TRIAL *
Date : 24th March - 04th April
4.9
Google RATING
92 9490 9490
T&C Apply*
Aanvii Hearing Solutions Pvt Ltd
Bannerghatta | Brookfield ITPL | Basavanagudi | Cunningham Road
CBI Road | Electronic City | HSR Layout | Indiranagar | Jayanagar | JP Nagar
Koramangala | Kengeri | KR Puram | Marathahalli | Nagarbhavi | Nandidurga Road
New BEL Road | Padmanabhanagar | R.R.Nagar | Sahakaranagar | Sanjaynagar
Vijayanagar | Vivek Nagar | Vidyaranyapura | Thanisandra | Whitefield | Yelahanka

In ever loving memory of

Prof. N. Venkataswamy Reddy
26.05.1948 - 24.03.2019
Founder of Lorven Group of Institutions
"Your grit and courage continues to inspire us"
Fondly remembered by Prof. C. Kanthamma (Wife)
Sons: Anil. V. Reddy & Ashok. V. Reddy
Daughters in-law and Grand Children

Assembly passes ballot paper bill amid BJP walkout

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Legislative Assembly on Monday passed the Karnataka Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj (Amendment) Bill, 2026, mandating ballot papers for rural local body polls, amid a walkout by the Opposition BJP.

Tabling the Bill, Rural Development and IT-BT Minister Priyank Kharge said the move was aimed at restoring public trust in the electoral process and safeguarding voter secrecy. He cited concerns over Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and unexplained spikes in polling percentages in states like Maharashtra, Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir.

The Bill seeks to replace references to voting machines with ballot papers, define "ballot paper" explicitly, and entrust electoral roll preparation to the State Election Commission, among other changes.

Leader of Opposition R Ashoka hit back: "Is this a Tuglaq Durbar in Karnataka?" He added, "If EVMs are not trustworthy, then Congress forming government in Karnataka and winning Telangana are also suspect."

Karkala MLA V Sunil Kumar warned, "We remember the past booth capturing and rigging. Ballot papers cannot help prevent intimidation of voters."

Shivajinagar MLA Rizwan Arshad alleged that the Election Commission refused CCTV footage of polling booths and machine-readable electoral rolls, though it should be above suspicion.

BJP MLA C N Ashwath Narayan clarified, "The booth footage is made available to those who raise election petition, else the footages are deleted after 45 days."

Amid protests, BJP members staged a walkout, and the Bill was passed by voice vote.

West Asia crisis: Plastic set to be pricey

Production of polymer has come down by 40%

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

Polymer is an integral part of the production of many household commodities. DH FILE PHOTO

Soon, the prices of many home essentials, from combs to washing machines to water bottles, could go up as the polymer industry in the state is struggling to source raw materials owing to the conflict in West Asia.

Many industries have now stopped taking new orders and this could result in a shortage in the market, pushing prices high.

"The production has come down by as much as 40% owing to the lack of raw materials. Many of us have stopped taking orders and have stopped production since the raw materials are not available," said Suresh N Sagar, Vice President of the State Polymer Manufacturers Association.

WAR SHOCKS

Polymer is an integral part of the production of many household commodities and such a disruption in production could push the prices of commonly used items higher.

"Plastic is part of every household product. For instance, the mixer motor has a polymer, and even the shirt buttons are made of polymer. The chair you sit on, the water pipe, the nylon net the farmers use, all of it requires polymer and such disruption in production could create a scarcity in the market, which will eventually lead to higher prices," he noted.

The price of Polypropylene, one of the basic raw materials for the polymer industry, has gone up from Rs 110 per kg to Rs 180 per kg and even at those inflated prices, the availability is low.

Shortage of natural gas for heating has added to the problem, industrialists said.

Heating treatment is an important step in manufacturing and the lack of liquid natural gas has put a pause on manufacturing, they said.

Industrialists fear that the conflict could have a long-term impact since the supply chain disruptions could take months to go back to normal, forcing the prices of the commodities up.

"Many facilities have been bombed and the situation seems to be bad. Even if the war ends soon, the facilities have to be re-established for the supply chain to go back to normal and that may take time. Considering this, in the long run, the increase in prices may be inevitable," said Shankar Prasad, another industrialist.

HC bins hotels' association's plea for non-stop LPG supply

Cites Bombay HC order, says matter falls within realm of executive policy

BENGALURU, DHNS

The high court on Monday disposed of the petition filed by Bangalore Hotels' Association and others seeking directions for uninterrupted supply of LPG commercial cylinders considering the affidavits filed by the Centre and the state government.

Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum said that it is open for the petitioner-association to apprise the concerned minister in the ongoing deliberations undertaken on Monday.

"..this court is of the considered view that, though the petitioner-association has filed the petition seeking certain directions, any necessary directions, if issued, would trench upon executive policy making in a very highly sensitive and domain involving national resources, international supply chains and competing sectoral demands. Judicial review under Article 226 though wide is not intended to supplant executive wisdom in such matters particularly when decisions are informed by technical, economic and geopolitical considerations," Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum said.

During the hearing, the Centre cited orders passed by a division bench of the Bombay high court pertaining to supply of LPG cylinders. Last week, the Bombay HC had disposed of the petition based on union government's assurances.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the union government, informed the high court about the communications sent by secretaries to the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas indicating allocation to all states. He said that it may be advisable to leave it to the executive to deal with the situation, changing every day.

On the other hand, the government advocate submitted that the state government has already apprised the minister of the prevailing situation and that the deliberations are underway with all stakeholders, including the petitioner-association, to evolve a mechanism.

Justice Magadum cited the Bombay HC order and noted that the supply of LPG constitutes complex international development. The matters relating to allocation, distribution and prioritization of essential commodities, especially at the time of global uncertainty and constrained supply, falls squarely within the realm of executive policy, the court said. "In the light of the view taken by the Bombay high court, this court is of the view that prayer sought in the petition cannot be entertained at this juncture, recognizing the limitations inherent in judicial intervention in such policy driven matter, this court finds itself in respectable agreement of the view taken by the Bombay HC," Justice Magadum said.

The court said, "In view of the statement made by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and the fact that the state government is seized of the matter and is in the process of consulting stakeholders to evolve appropriate measures, this court is of the opinion that no further directions are called for."

The petitioners had stated that the government's new priority-based allocation of 1,000 commercial LPG cylinders per day to hotels in the state does not meet requirements. Bengaluru city alone has 40,000 hotels and this allocation is less than 5% of the regular supplies, the petitioners said.

State's daily share of commercial cylinders up from 7k to 16k

BENGALURU, DHNS: Food and Civil Supplies Minister K H Muniyappa on Monday said the LPG supply shortage will be partially resolved in Karnataka with the Centre increasing the daily share of commercial cylinders from 7,000 to 16,105. The allocation is however just 30 to 40% of the state's daily requirement.

"Of the total share, we will distribute 10,000 cylinders to hotels. Educational institutions and public healthcare centres will get 4,200 cylinders. About 1,200 cylinders will be reserved for airports and railway station canteens," Muniyappa told reporters here.

K H Muniyappa

He said establishments which want commercial cylinders must first register with GAIL Gas in a week's time.

Registration, he said, is a must to streamline distribution of commercial cylinders.

"If a commercial establishment has been using five cylinders a day, we will provide them two. If a bigger facility has been using 30 cylinders, we will give them 10. These facilities can use alternative fuel sources to run business without much disruptions," the minister said.

Muniyappa said there has been no problem with the supply of domestic LPG cylinders.

"If the gas agency does not supply the cylinders for domestic use within 25 days of booking, citizens must register a complaint with the area manager of the gas distributing agency. By registering a complaint, the agency will get to know if suppliers are diverting cylinders for commercial use," he said.

Over the past 10 days, Karnataka has distributed over 30.51 lakh domestic LPG cylinders and 67,641 commercial cylinders.

In addition, around 40,083 commercial LPG cylinders (761.655 metric tonnes) have been supplied under industrial and bulk categories, the minister said.

Crackdown on hoarding

The government has launched a crackdown on misuse of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purposes. Acting under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, officials have seized cylinders and registered around 25 complaints across multiple districts.

Bengaluru Urban reported the highest number of seizures, with 485 cylinders confiscated, followed by Bengaluru Rural (115), Bidar (105) and Chikkaballapur (135). Other districts, including Belagavi, Davangere, Dharwad, Mysuru and Tumakuru, also reported multiple cases of illegal use.

In total, 1,448 LPG cylinders being misused for commercial purposes were seized across Karnataka.

Hoteliers estimate losses at Rs 150 crore in three weeks

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

The hotel industry in Bengaluru has suffered losses to the tune of Rs 150 crore in just the last three weeks, an estimate by the hoteliers' association showed.

Even if the situation eases a bit with partial supply of commercial gas, the industry may still see losses, hoteliers said.

Menu trimmed

Reduction in operation hours and menu along with cancellation of tourist bookings owing to flight cancellations have resulted in the huge losses.

"A majority of the hotels had to cut down on timings and operate only a few hours since commercial gas was unavailable. Many other hotels have remained shut. A few others have cut down on the menu options. As a result of all this, footfall has reduced and business has taken a hit," P C Rao of Bruhat Bangalore Hotels Association, told *DH*.

Many tourist bookings have been cancelled as there have been disruptions in flight services as well and this has impacted business, industry experts said.

Several hotels and establishments have seen reduction and cancellations of corporate events and bookings of banquet halls.

"Many corporate events have been put on hold since many foreign delegates could not travel. This has again impacted business," one of the hoteliers noted.

'Losses will mount'

Though the government has now agreed to supply close to 33% of their demand for commercial LPG cylinders, the losses might continue to pile up, say worried hoteliers.

Some hope

"It (increase in supply of commercial cylinders) is definitely a good development and we are seeing some hope. However, it is still only 33% and we will not be able to operate on normal basis," Rao said.

Supplementary estimates of Rs 14,767 crore tabled

BENGALURU, DHNS: Supplementary estimates for Rs 14,767 crore of additional expenditure in the current fiscal were tabled in the Assembly on Monday.

Supplementary estimates are additional expenditures incurred over and above budget provisions. In fiscal ending this March, additional expenditures include Rs 1,025 crore to clear various irrigation works bills, Rs 147 crore on Sadhana Samavesha to mark 2 years of the government and Rs 223 crore for railway barricading to prevent human-elephant conflict.

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda tabled the supplementary estimates on behalf of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

Rs 1.25 cr for HDD's car

The government spent Rs 1.25 crore to purchase a Volvo XC90 for former prime minister HD Deve Gowda, according to the supplementary estimates tabled on Monday. The government also spent Rs 1.4 crore to print a book comprising 'selected' speeches of Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot. An additional amount of Rs 50 lakh was provided to clear pending electricity and water bills of ministers' homes.

Other expenditures

Rs 15 crore for helicopter and air travels by Governor, CM, ministers and other VIPs.

Rs 110 crore towards scholarship and tuition fee reimbursement for minority students.

Rs 10 crore towards rehabilitation of families affected by landslide at Meppadi in Wayanad, Kerala.

Rs 5 crore each for Brahmin Development Board and Arya-Vysya Development Corporation.

Rs 60 lakh to Supreme Court senior advocate Kapil Sibal for two appearances representing the government.

Rs 15 crore for development of various temples, mutts and trusts.

Rs 5.13 crore towards bills from the Belagavi winter session of the legislature.

Rs 5.5 crore towards pending bills from the 2019 and 2021 Assembly bypolls and the upcoming Davangere South and Bagalkot bypolls.

Blackened & sickened...

Koppal village, from Page 1

Hulugappa of Kunikeri village says that soot-laden fodder has proved fatal to cattle.

Mallappa, once a cultivator of diverse vegetable crops, has now shifted to maize as yields have plummeted and produce fails to sell due to the black dust contamination. Similarly, many farmers in the area have stopped growing pulses and oilseeds altogether.

Three medical shops for a population of around 2,300 in a nondescript village like Hirebaganal is indicative of collapsing health of villagers. "As much as 80% of the people seek medicine for cough, cold and respiratory related problems," says Prahallad, the proprietor of a medical shop. A nebuliser can be found in almost every household, claim villagers.

Koppal DC Suresh B Itnal says the district administration is taking measures, including health camps and crop surveys, to address the situation. He cited a Central Pollution Control Board report, which identified lapses in the functioning of industries in the region.

According to the report, some industries have not maintained standard buffer zone, effluents and emissions have occasionally been excessive, raw materials are not always properly covered and conveyor belts are sometimes damaged. "We have directed industries to implement measures recommended by CPCB, and we are closely monitoring their execution," he says.

Y S Harishankar, environmental officer, Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB), Koppal, says KSPCB has sent notices of proposed directions to five industries and a report has been submitted.

KSPCB chairperson P M Narendraswamy says, "We will assess extent of damage based on reports. Many firms are not complying with rules, but we must give industries an opportunity to rectify."

DH
DECCAN HERALD
Obituaries & Remembrance Advertisements
Log on to : https://homages.deccanherald.com
or
Scan QR code to access booking form

And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Matthew 28:20

With profound grief and heavy hearts, we regret to inform the sad demise of

Mr. GEORGE THOMAS

4th September 1953 - 23rd March 2026

Funeral service will be held at St. Gregorios Orthodox Cathedral, #18 Hosur Road, next to Johnson Market. Bangalore, on Wednesday, 25th March 2026 at 3:30 pm, followed by burial at Hosur Road Christian Cemetery, Gate No. 1.

A humble and generous soul, he will be remembered for his quiet faith, boundless kindness, and selfless love for his family and all whose lives he touched.

Deeply Mourned by: Anita (wife), siblings Sally & Babu, Abu & Suja, Sheela & Mon Nephews & Nieces & their Children

DH Classifieds
More value, more impact
email: classifieds@deccanherald.co.in
For your Classified Advertisements, Contact:
080 - 45557160 /161/ 162/ 163/ 164/
98451 14560 / 97318 10277/ 9886213331

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client, **Sri. K.G. SURESH, S/o. Gangadharaiah,** aged about 39 years, Residing at No. 55/56, 2nd Cross, 80 feet Main Road, Bhuvaneshwarinagar, BSK III Stage, Bangalore-560085,(Mobile No: 9740513966) is intending to purchase Schedule Property from its owners **(1) Smt. Jayalakshmi and others (2) Sri. Shankar and others, (3) D.N. Shantha and others,(4) M.R. Sumithra and others (5) Sri. Yadukumarand others**

Any person having any manner of right, title, interest or claim on the schedule property may contact me in my undersigned contact details with all relevant documents and may offer their objections in writing within **Seven(07) days** from this day, failing which my client will proceed to complete the sale transaction, by accepting the title of **(1) Smt. Jayalakshmi and others (2) Sri. Shankar and others, (3) D.N. Shantha and others, (4) M.R. Sumithra and others (5) Sri. Yadukumarand others.**

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the residential property bearing site No. 15 formed out of Sy. No. 21 of Sunkenahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, presently known as Old P.I.D. No. 51-49-15, New P.I.D. No. 164-W0084-5, B.B.M.P Ward No. 51, present B.B.M.P ward No. 164, 10 Cross, Ashoknagar, Bangalore-560050 Municipal No. 15, measuring East to West 30 feet and North to South 45 feet, and bounded on :- **East by :** Site No. 14, **West by :** Site No. 16, **North by :** Road, **South by :** Private property (earlier belonging to Padmavathamma)

Sd/- B.I. Krishnamurthgy
Advocate
No. 214, 1st Floor, 4th Cross, Cubbonpet, Bengaluru-560002.
Place: Bengaluru, Date: 24-03-2026

Sri Lakshmi Multi Speciality Hospital
#127/1, Sri Gandhada Kaval, Sunkadakatte, Magadi Main Road, Bangalore - 560091

Notice: DISPOSAL OF HOSPITAL MEDICAL RECORDS

Inpatient medical records from IP No. **6390** to **9649** for the period of **January 2015 to December 2015** will be discorded. Whosoever is interested can contact the Medical Records Department to collect their records within one month from the date of this notification.

Note: Not applicable for Medico Legal Case, Death, Birth and Paediatric Medical Records.
Contact: 95380 99977 / 95381 99977

PERSONAL

Change of Name

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **ABDUL SHUKOOR,** residing at 16th Cross, 17th Main Road, J C Nagar, Kurubarahalli, Bengaluru-560086, have changed my name to **ASHWINI,** I have changed my gender from Male to Female, vide affidavit dated 15-12-2025 before notary Onkarappa N.R., Bengaluru. Henceforth I shall be called **ASHWINI** only

I, WATSON FRANK DSOUZA, S/o Anthony Dsouza, Residing at Flat No.34,Block-5, Jeevan Griha,25th Main Road,JP Nagar, 1st Phase,Bengaluru-560078. Have Changed my Name WATSON FRANK DSOUZA to WATSON FRANK ANTHONY DSOUZA vide affidavit Dated:23.03.2026 before Notary K.V.Mani, Bangalore.

BUILDERS ESSENTIAL

Water Proofing

'WE-FIX' LEAKING ROOF, SUMP, SKYLIGHT, BATHROOM, TILING, HOUSE PAINTING, ROOF COOL EPOXY COATING. MACBOND. 9448572697

CAUTION NOTICE

Readers are advised to make appropriate thorough enquiries before acting upon any advertisement. This newspaper does not vouch or subscribe to the claims and representations made by advertisers.

Advertisement Manager
The Printers (Mysore) Pvt. Ltd.
Bengaluru

CONNECT

GRAND OPENING
3rd Store
MYSORE SILKS Weaver's of Seere Utsava By Sulakshmi Silks
Opening Offer 60% off
ON PURE MYSORE CREPE SILK SAREE

Join us to celebrate SEERE UTSAVA 3
in our new store (16th to 31st March)

SULAKSHMI SILKS
Karnataka's Biggest SEERE UTSAVA
Call: 99727 18898 | 93531 38343 | 9886306643 | 96631 27606
Add: No.119/1, Srinidhi Complex, 11th cross, Malleshwaram, Bengaluru-560003

SESSION SNIPPETS

No filing of returns for professional tax

▸ **BENGALURU, DHNS:** The Legislative Assembly passed the Karnataka Tax on Profession, Trades, Callings and Employments (Amendment) Bill 2026, which exempts persons paying the professional tax from furnishing the returns and those exempted from paying tax (senior citizens, disabled persons and serving armed forces) from filing zero returns, which was a requirement.

"The changes were made to simplify compliance, reduce paperwork and facilitate ease of doing business, which removes the compliance burden off the common man," said Revenue Minister Krishna Byregowda, who tabled the Bill on behalf of Finance Minister Siddaramaiah.

Employees with a gross monthly income of Rs 25,000 or more are liable to pay professional tax ofRs 2,500 annually.

Jnana Bhandar Manuscripts Bill passed

▸ **BENGALURU, DHNS:** The Assembly on Monday, unanimously passed the Karnataka Jnana Bhandar Manuscripts and Digitisation Bill 2026 meant for survey, documentation, conservation, digitisation, research, publication and public access of manuscripts in the state and to establish a Karnataka Manuscripts Authority.

Law minister H K Patil, who tabled the bill, said innumerable manuscripts were with individuals and organisations, and the government intends to protect and preserve these treasure troves of knowledge related to traditional medicine systems, history, science, geography and mathematics.

"Some families own bundles of manuscripts which are kept safe and worshipped, but sadly are not being studied. The government intends to protect the manuscripts. The Authority will be given an annual target of five lakh pages to digitise the manuscripts," Patil said.

The new law has expanded the definition of manuscripts as handwritten or including palm leaf document, birch-bark, paper, cloth, copper-plate, stone inscription or any material bearing script in Sanskrit, Kannada, Prakrit, Pali, Tamil, Telugu, Arabic, Persian, Modi, Sharada or any other Indian or foreign script not printed or lithographed, and I clauses illustrated manuscripts, miniature paintings on palm leaf or paper and audio-video recordings of oral traditions that preserve ancient knowledge.

Inauguration of new door at Soudha today

BENGALURU, DHNS: A new door installed at the Western entrance of the Vidhana Soudha will be inaugurated on Tuesday.

The contract of the project was handed over to Karnataka State Forest Industries Corporation Limited. The door, made out of rosewood, contains the national emblem — Lion Capital of Ashoka — and the state emblem Gandaberunda. The door was built at a cost of Rs 84 lakh.

Biometric attendance for MLAs: Khader

BENGALURU, DHNS: Speaker U T Khader told the Assembly that a biometric-based attendance system will be introduced for legislators.

"For the next session, we'll do away with the system of legislators signing the register. They will have to use a biometric (thumb impression) system, which will capture the exact time of their arrival to the session," Khader added.

'Mindful of challenges': Govt on fiscal crisis in Himachal Pradesh

KBG defends guarantee spend, terms it demand-side economics

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda makes a point in the Legislative Assembly on Monday.

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Karnataka government on Monday told the Assembly that it was "mindful" of fiscal challenges even as the Opposition BJP warned of a Himachal Pradesh-like crisis due to ballooning subsidies.

During a discussion on the 2026-27 Budget, BJP's V Sunil Kumar said 14% of money was going into subsidy schemes.

"Over Rs 1 lakh crore has been spent on the 'guarantee' schemes. We know what the Supreme Court has said on freebies. The state is being pushed towards a subsidy culture. Members of all parties should discuss the long-term implications of this," the Karkala MLA said.

Senior BJP lawmaker S Suresh Kumar said Himachal Pradesh (where Congress is in power) has announced salary cuts and deferrals due to the 'guarantee' schemes. "We need to have a survey on where our state is going," he said.

Replying to this, Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda (KBG) said the government was "mindful of the challenges in the future" while maintaining that Karnataka's economy was better than other states.

"The GST collection is a reflection of the state's economic activity. Karnataka has the highest growth rate of 11%, more than Maharashtra and Gujarat," Gowda said.

Karnataka has India's highest per-capita income (PCI), Gowda pointed out. "I'm not saying everybody has an income. But globally, PCI is an indicator of the economy. In the absence of a perfect equation, we use PCI," he said.

Keynesian economics

Gowda defended the government's spending on the 'guarantee' schemes. "We have villanised subsidies," he said.

"In the last 150 years, there have been two economic approaches: supply-side economics to help manufacturers and producers, and demand-side economics to support citizens who're purchasers," the minister explained.

"On the supply side, tax concessions are provided. On the demand side, universal basic income is given to spur economic activity by putting more resources in the hands of consumers," Gowda said.

According to Gowda, every rupee given to a person is used at least five times. "This is called the multiplier effect. That's how economic activity grows. This leads to more demand. Ultimately, we need consumers to create demand. Without demand, will factors be set up?" he said, adding that money given to people at the bottom of the pyramid would come back into the market.

SUNIL KUMAR
BJP MLA

"Over Rs 1 lakh crore has been spent on the 'guarantee' schemes. We know what the Supreme Court has said on freebies. The state is being pushed towards a subsidy culture. Members of all parties should discuss the long-term implications of this.

KRISHNA BYRE GOWDA
Revenue Minister

"This is 100-year-old Keynesian economics. Countries came out of depression with demand-side strengthening. It's a sure-shot approach for economic growth.

BJP MLA from Karkala V Sunil Kumar speaks during the session in the Legislative Assembly.

Govt will junk 2025 social-educational survey: Sunil Kumar

Says Rs 500 cr spent on the exercise

BENGALURU, DHNS

BJP lawmaker V Sunil Kumar on Monday predicted that the Siddaramaiah-led Congress is likely to junk the Social and Educational Survey, conducted last year, as it found no mention in the 2026-27 Budget speech.

The survey was carried out in September-October 2025 by the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes headed by Madhusudhan Naik.

"The government spent Rs 500 crore. It's been seven months. There wasn't a single line on the survey in the budget or the Governor's address (to the legislature). The CM, who calls himself as the primary trustee of the tax money, should've said when the report will be tabled," Kumar said in the Assembly during a discussion on the budget.

"The 2015 Kantharaj survey was thrown into the dustbin. The 2024 Jayaprakash Hegde report was thrown into the dustbin after infighting in Congress. The CM said the (Naik) survey will become the basis for budget-making. I don't think the CM has that intention. I think a new dustbin awaits the Naik report," the Karkala MLA said.

Kumar listed out issues which, he said, lacked harmony words and deeds: addressing regional imbalances and replacing NEP with SEP.

The former minister attacked the government over internal reservation for Scheduled Castes imbroglio. "About Rs 100 crore was spent on the Justice H N Nagmohan Das Commission. But the Cabinet decided something that wasn't recommended by the commission. In and around Dakshina Kannada, there are Adi Dravidas who worship Sathya Saramani. The government hasn't specified where they come under internal reservation, leaving them to compete with everyone," he said.

Kumar said Siddaramaiah mentioned recruitment to fill 56,432 posts without allocating funds for this. "Where's the money? You've announced it only to placate job aspirants who were protesting. Aren't you lying?" he said.

During his speech, Kumar quoted Girish Karnad from his first play Yayati: "You can walk a path without light. How can I walk a path without dreams?" Kumar then said: "By making people depend on more and more subsidies, they're being made to walk a dreamless path."

Proposal for special plan to uplift Devadasis submitted to govt: Minister

BENGALURU, DHNS: Women and Child Development Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar on Monday said that the proposal for a special package action plan to former Devadasis had been prepared and submitted to the government.

Responding to a question by BJP MLC Hemalatha Naik in the Legislative Council, the minister said: "Former Devadasis aged more than 45 years are being paid a pension. A fund of Rs 30,000 to Rs 50,000 has been paid to 13,663 former Devadasi women by the Karnataka State Women's Development Board from 2013-14 till now." She explained that a special action plan of Rs 250 crore had been announced for the upliftment of former Devadasi women.

Noting that all Devadasi women belonged to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities, Hebbalkar said a meeting had been fixed with Social Welfare Minister Dr HC Mahadevappa in a few days to discuss the different measures that can be initiated to uplift the Devadasi community in the state.

She also noted that former Devadasi women were being provided pension, housing, health facilities and activities that increase their income levels. As many as 10,725 former Devadasi women were being provided houses through the Rajiv Gandhi Housing Corporation.

The minister explained that 23,395 former Devadasis were enumerated during the survey that conducted across 15 districts of the state from September 15 to December 31, 2025. She added that overall 90,092 first, second and third generation children of former Devadasis were found in the state.

Use of mobiles and social media by kids: Govt to present policy in next session

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Karnataka government is working out a policy to regulate the use of mobile phones and social media by children below the age of 16 and the same will be presented during the next session of the legislature for further discussion, Minister for School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa informed the Legislative Council on Monday.

Madhu Bangarappa

The minister was replying to questions of senior MLCs Pratap Simha Nayak and Javarayi Gowda.

"As the announcement was made in the budget recently, we will consult stakeholders, including parents, before framing the policy and let the House discuss intensely on the same and provide inputs," the minister said.

He told the House that the Information Technology Department has also formed a committee to study the matter.

"It is important for us to protect children from the ill-effects of social media and mobile phones. We are the first state in the country to come up with a social media ban and we want to make it a model for the entire country," Bangarappa added.

"We cannot directly ban mobile phones as it is the module of communication for many parents with their children, we cannot pull it out at once in this AI and modern era. Parents' consent and opinions matter the most. We need to understand this from the parents' point of view. There are countries that have banned social media use by children under the age of 16 years and we will study the laws implemented by those countries," he further said.

The minister also acknowledged concerns raised by some House members that excessive use of mobile phones is affecting students severely. "If it harms their future, we must take strict action," he said, cautioning that mere prohibition may not be effective, as children may continue to access devices secretly. Sharing details about the moral science textbooks, he said, the books are being provided free of cost to all students from this year, and specific periods have been fixed to teach the subject.

Inter-caste marriage: Assembly passes bill against 'honour' killing, crimes

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Assembly on Monday passed a bill against any conduct that interferes with individual freedom of choice in marriage.

The bill provides legal protection against crimes committed in the name of 'honour' and 'tradition' that violate individual's liberty, autonomy and dignity in case of an inter-caste marriage.

The Karnataka Freedom of Choice in Marriage and Prevention and Prohibition of Crimes in the Name of Honour and Tradition (Eva Nammava Eva Nammava) Bill 2026, was passed, despite objections raised by BJP members.

Law Minister H K Patil, tabling the bill, said though society agreed to common social values and shunned caste discrimination, it did not reflect in practice.

"We hear about honour killings. This law paves the way for social transformation or even revolution as it gives legal safeguards to prevent crimes committed against persons choosing inter-caste marriages," said Patil.

The district magistrate would be present at the Eva Nammava Vedike - a safe platform created by the government to ensure safety during the inter-caste marriage ceremony, the minister said.

"Couples are being subjected to harassment. They are becoming victims of crime or forced to elope," he added.

Former law minister S Suresh Kumar objected to section 4 of the Bill that mentions that the couple desirous of marrying each other needed to declare their age and "willingness to be together".

"The government should clarify if it means willingness to live-in. A legislation should leave no scope for misinterpretation," said Kumar, who argued people's mindset needed to change and that existing laws were sufficient to address honour killings.

Karkala MLA V Sunil Kumar demanded to know how the new law was better than Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita.

"You brought a new bill for hate speech, Vemula bill and now Evanaarava bill, though central laws have comprehensively addressed these issues. A murder is a murder. Why do we need a second law?".

Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka flagged concerns over the government not addressing the issue of poor conviction due to witnesses turning hostile.

He felt the prescribed punishment in the bill was diluting the provisions under the central law.

"A murder warrants lifer or death. But the bill proposes five years imprisonment," Ashoka said.

Patil defended the bill, saying there were 25 provisions and crimes included not only murder, but other offences.

The law empowers the government to appoint members to the Eva Nammava Vedike and prescribe the nature of training to a district judge presiding over a designated special fast track court.

The minister asserted that the new Act would in no way prejudice the provisions under the central Acts (Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023) and Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

"We will consider the opinions of Opposition members while framing rules," Patil assured.

Bypolls to curtail Budget session?

BENGALURU, DHNS: Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly R Ashoka on Monday urged Speaker U T Khader not to "curtail" the Budget session amid indications of such a plan in the wake of bypolls.

Ashoka said this when he found that neither CM Siddaramaiah nor his deputy D K Shivakumar were in the House. "We wanted to discuss Bengaluru's issues, but no one is here. What should we do?" he asked.

Khader said, "Let them come, matter can be taken up." To this, Ashoka said he had "doubts" about them showing up. "There are indications the session may be curtailed. Please don't allow it," he said.

Khader said any such decision would be taken after discussing with Opposition. "There's no need for any discussion. Let session go on," Ashoka said. As per schedule, the Budget session ends on March 27. Siddaramaiah is to reply to the discussion on the Budget on March 25.

Speaking to reporters, Minister Santosh Lad admitted that there were indications that the session might be curtailed.

"The session has been on for 3 weeks. Despite holidays in between, it has been held for minimum number of days. I don't have complete information about what the Opposition, the CM and Speaker will decide. But such indications are there," Lad said.

I'll show my power in 2028: Revanna

BENGALURU, DHNS

JD(S) lawmaker H D Revanna, son of former prime minister H D Deve Gowda, threw a challenge at the governing Congress for the next Assembly elections.

"Some believe Revanna is finished. Come 2028, I'll show what my power is," Revanna said during a debate on the 2026-27 Budget in the Assembly. Revanna is out on bail in a sexual harassment case. His son Prajwal Revanna, the former Hassan MP, was convicted for rape last year. Revanna's wife Bhavani Revanna is out on anticipatory bail in an abduction case.

"The amount of vengeance politics happening in the state is huge. Citing some law, this government has withdrawn four persons who were deputed to help former prime minister (Deve Gowda), considering his old age," Revanna, a six-time MLA, said.

"An FIR was filed against me in Bengaluru. Was there any photo of mine, or a cassette implicating me? You're showing the way forward," Revanna said, addressing Home Minister G Parameshwara. "But Parameshwara is in a fix himself, so I won't target him".

Revanna said he was targeted for his influence in Hassan district. "Only people can finish off Revanna. I'll face even if 10 more cases are filed against me."

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-3 (BSWML), 1st Floor, BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru- 560052

No: DGM-3/BSWML/Tender/26/Adde-01/25-26 Date: 23.03.2026

ADDENDUM-1

Addendum to Tender Notification No:DGM-3/BSWML/Tender/26/2025-26 Date: 16.03.2026 is as below.

Sl. No	Tender Document Reference	To be read as
01	INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT) — Sl. No 1; Name of the Work: Bio-Enzyme based Odour Suppression and Basic infrastructure development works in and around MSGP processing plants in Doddaballapura Constituency.; Amount put to tender Rs.in lakhs (Excluding GST): 800.21; EMD (in Rupees): 8,00,211.00; Stipulated Period of Contract: 11 Months	INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT) — Sl. No 1; Name of the Work: Bio-Enzyme based Odour Suppression and Basic infrastructure development works in and around MSGP processing plants in Doddaballapura Constituency.; Amount put to tender Rs.in lakhs (Excluding GST): 823.74; EMD (in Rupees): 8,23,740.00; Stipulated Period of Contract: 11 Months

DIPR/CP/6409/Shirdi Sai/2025-26

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-3, BSWML, Bengaluru

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-3 (BSWML), 1st Floor, BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru- 560052

No: DGM-3/BSWML/Tender/25/Adde-01/25-26 Date: 23.03.2026

ADDENDUM-1

Addendum to Tender Notification No:DGM-3/BSWML/Tender/25/2025-26 Date: 12.03.2026 is as below.

Sl. No	Tender Document Reference	To be read as
01	INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT) — Sl. No 1; Name of the Work: Inert Landfill Area Protection and Nuisance Reduction Works in and around Hullahalli Inert Landfill Site in Bengaluru South Constituency, including enzyme spraying, safety measures and allied basic infrastructure works; Amount put to tender Rs.in lakhs (Excluding GST): 1684.15; EMD (in Rupees): 16,84,158.00; Stipulated Period of Contract: 09 Months	INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT) — Sl. No 1; Name of the Work: Inert Landfill Area Protection and Nuisance Reduction Works in and around Hullahalli Inert Landfill Site in Bengaluru South Constituency, including enzyme spraying, safety measures and allied basic infrastructure works.; Amount put to tender Rs.in lakhs (Excluding GST): 1600.97; EMD (in Rupees): 16,00,979.00; Stipulated Period of Contract: 09 Months

DIPR/CP/6410/Shirdi Sai/2025-26

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-3, BSWML, Bengaluru

Conflict has created challenges...

Modi, from Page 1

An immediate challenge in this war, the prime minister stated, would be the expected increase in electricity demand with the onset of the summer season.

"Currently, all power plants in the country have sufficient coal stocks. All systems from power generation to power supply are being continuously monitored, and the government's preparations have been significantly supported by renewable energy," he said.

Reiterating the steps taken by the government to ensure an uninterrupted supply of essential commodities, the prime minister gave a broad outline of the government's energy security initiatives and strategy to address all such short-term, medium-term, and long-term impacts.

India's current strategic petroleum reserves of over 5.3 million metric tonnes. The government is seeking to increase this figure to over 6.5 million metric tonnes, Modi informed the house. Diversification in sourcing India's energy needs and expansion in ethanol blending, too, have eased the pressure on energy requirements, he said.

Modi assured the Parliament that India has sufficient food reserves and indicated that the government will not let the escalating cost of fertiliser affect farmers during the Kharif sowing season. The domestic production of urea and DAP has increased in the last decade, Modi said.

"During the Covid-19 period and the wars of that time, there was a disruption in the global supply chain. A bag of urea reached Rs 3,000 in the world market, but the same bag was made available to Indian farmers for less than Rs 300," the PM added.

Calling upon the state governments to undertake strict monitoring against black marketeers and hoarders, Modi urged people to remain extremely cautious against those seeking to "exploit the situation" by spreading lies.

SC questions 'reluctance'...

Anil Ambani, from Page 1

He said the probe agencies, so far, attached assets worth Rs 15,000 crore and also arrested four persons, including a few senior officials.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for Sarma, referred to a SEBI report and stated that it has been highlighted that a scheme was devised to siphon off money, yet the CBI has not made any arrests so far. "Arrests have been made. We cannot make random arrests," Mehta said.

On this, the bench said, "We cannot direct (them) whom to arrest; but the investigating agencies, the way they have shown reluctance, is not acceptable. They should say in a time-bound manner as to what has been found. Your investigation should reveal what has been done and must inspire confidence not only in us, but in everybody."

The bench referred to certain facts disclosed in the fresh status reports of the probe agencies and said CBI and ED are presently probing seven and eight FIRs, respectively. It also said that a loan amount of more than Rs 3,000 crore has been apparently settled by paying Rs 26 crore.

The bench said it is estimated that the total fraud amount is around Rs 73,000 crore.

"The investigating agencies must join hands and find out the issue. We impress upon CBI and ED that the probe be completed most dispassionately and independently so that it is taken to a logical conclusion in a time-bound manner," the bench said.

The court noted that the Solicitor General assured that no stone would be left unturned to unearth the truth. He has pointed to the second status report by ED, where details have been sought from financial institutions.

"We allow the prayer in its entirety," the bench ordered.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Anil Ambani, said that due to the pendency of the PIL, the lending banks are not willing to have a dialogue with him to settle the dues. "Due to the pendency of the case, they are hesitant," Rohatgi said.

The bench said it has not stopped anyone from having any consultations. It has sought fresh status reports from the probe agencies and fixed the PIL for further hearing after four weeks. The PIL alleged systematic diversion of public funds, fabrication of financial statements and institutional complicity across multiple entities of the Anil Ambani-led Reliance ADAG.

Bagalkot bypoll: BJP, Cong nominees file papers amid show of strength

Siddu slams BJP's 'Hindutva politics'; Cong using money power, says Vijayendra

BAGALKOT, DHNS

The BJP candidate, Veeranna Charantimath and the Congress nominee Umesh Meti, filed their nomination papers for the byelection to Bagalkot Assembly constituency amid show of strength on the last day of filing nominations, on Monday.

Both the candidates took out massive processions ahead of filing their papers. Charantimath filed his nomination papers in the presence of BJP state president B Y Vijayendra, Union minister Pralhad Joshi, MPs Jagadish Shettar, P C Gaddigoudar and Govind Karjol among others.

The Congress nominee Umesh Meti submitted his papers to the district election officer in the presence of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, his deputy D K Shivakumar, ministers Satish Jarkiholi, Shivanand Patil and R B Timmapur.

The byelection for Bagalkot was necessitated following the demise of Congress MLA H Y Meti.

Congress party walks the talk: CM

Asserting that the Congress will win the byelection and retain Bagalkot seat, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah launched a scathing attack on the BJP.

"The BJP leaders are experts in spreading lies. In the 2018 election manifesto, the BJP had made 600 promises, but they didn't fulfill even 10%," he said.

"The BJP portrays itself as inheritor of Hindu pride. I am a Hindu, so is Umesh Meti. They (BJP) are anti-poor, backward classes and Dalits. They criticise guarantees, but did not bother to implement a single pro-poor programme when in power," he charged.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah appeals to voters to support Congress candidate for Bagalkot Umesh Meti, during a public rally in the city on Monday. DH PHOTOS

BJP state president B Y Vijayendra, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi, MPs Jagadish Shettar, Govind Karjol, party leader Arvind Limbavali and others take part in a procession ahead of party nominee Veeranna Charantimath filing nomination papers for the bypoll to Bagalkot Assembly seat, on Monday.

The Congress party has walked the talk. Only Congress can provide social justice, he said.

Shivakumar said the byelection in Bagalkot is between dharma (righteousness) and adharma (unrighteousness).

Precursor for 2028 Assembly polls: BYV

Addressing a public rally, Vijayendra said, "I know how the Congress fights the elections. The chief minister and his Cabinet colleagues camp in the constituency, bringing currency notes in gunny bags... I have seen it in the bypolls to Sira and KR Pete. They will do the same in the bypoll to Bagalkot. They will bring money looted from Valmiki corporation and SC/ST funds. Don't fall prey to money power," he said.

People are fed up with the Congress government's corruption. The people of Bagalkot will support the BJP. The bypolls are a precursor for the 2028 Assembly election, Vijayendra said.

Union minister Pralhad Joshi said that the electors will send the son (in Bagalkot) and grandson (in Davangere) packing.

"The party had lost in Bagalkot due to lack of unity, but this time we will put up a concerted effort to help Charantimath cross the line."

Winnable candidates fielded, not backing family politics, says Siddaramaiah

DAVANGERE, DHNS

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah claimed on Monday that the Congress was not encouraging family politics by giving the ticket to the grandson of veteran Congress leader, the late Shamanur Shivashankarappa, in the byelection to the Davangere South seat.

He was reacting to criticism in this regard, while speaking to reporters here, after Congress nominee Samarth Shamanur Mallikarjuna filed his nomination papers.

The CM defended the move, saying, "We have issued tickets to winnable candidates in the bypolls". Siddaramaiah said, "It has been a practice to field family members of bereaved legislators in the bypolls."

Earlier, he told reporters at the helipad where he landed in a chopper from Bengaluru with Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, that party leaders would try to assuage the feelings of Muslim leaders in the Congress, who are upset with the denial of ticket to the community from Davangere South.

Party leaders would convince rebel candidate Sadiq Pailwan to withdraw from the fray, Siddaramaiah added.

He said Muslim leaders would be given better representation in the government in the coming days.

The CM said the Congress had defeated the sons of former chief ministers Basavaraj Bommai and H D Kumaraswamy in byelections in the past. So, defeating BJP in the bypolls this time was not difficult, he said.

Siddaramaiah claimed that the minorities, backward classes and the poor were with the Congress as the party's government had delivered on the promises made during the Assembly elections.

Meanwhile, BJP candidate T Srinivasa Dasakariappa filed nomination papers with former chief minister B S Yediyurappa, former minister M P Renukacharya, former union minister G M Siddeshwara and former MLA of JD(S), H S Shivashankar

Speaking on the occasion, Yediyurappa exuded confidence that BJP would win the bypolls.

Won't back out under pressure: D'gere rebel

Congress rebel candidate for Davangere South bypoll, Sadiq Pailwan filed his nomination papers on Monday. He said that he won't back out from the fray by yielding to any pressure, reports DHNS from Davangere.

"This is a decision that is beyond discussion and negotiation. I will not yield to the pressure of CM Siddaramaiah and DCM D K Shivakumar. I will not hold any talk with them...I am fully confident of winning the election," he said.

Pailwan claimed that the Congress high command did not stick to its promise of giving him a ticket.

"I served as a disciple and son of Shamanur Shivashankarappa for 40 years. I worked hard to help him win six elections. Even after Shivashankarappa's demise, the hope that minorities would get a chance to contest has become a distant dream. Congress leaders have neglected minorities," he alleged.

Govt publishes policy to...

Draft policy, from Page 1

"We started working on it a year ago considering the increasing mental health issues among young people. Through meetings with various stakeholders, we realised that there are increasing instances of anxiety and mental health problems among students, and guiding schools, teachers and parents to address this will help. This is just the first step. We will take this forward with further measures," Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao told *DH*.

The government is also exploring collaboration with digital technology and media industries for ethical content development, and a certified age-limit for digital media use. Better pop-up policies that could prevent opening of multiple inappropriate sites and exposure to harmful content, and developing age-appropriate phones or devices for children that could come with an OS update for devices as they grow older are also some options the government wants to look at.

The policy also weighs in on developing a special 'child plan' for phones with audio-only options and those that can stop the use of the internet by 7 pm.

The policy focuses on a three-fold approach — the state government will form directives for the schools to adhere to, the teachers will be trained for healthy use of technology, and the school will communicate with the parents about the digital well-being of their children.

The draft also notes the key roles parents play in ensuring children are digitally safe. The schools and teachers are expected to guide parents on promoting positive reinforcement and build shared family rituals and offline bonding. The parents should also set structured routines with clear screen-time rules and prioritize privacy, safety, and open conversation, it stated.

Trump extends Hormuz deadline...

Iran, From Page 1

Trump said if a deal is reached, the US would move to take Iran's enriched uranium. Iran has adamantly refused such demands in the past, insisting it has the right to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes.

Iran's state-run news agencies portrayed Trump as backing down. The latest threatened attacks could have cut electricity to millions of people in Iran and around the Gulf, and knocked out desalination plants that provide many desert nations with drinking water. There are also increasing concerns about the consequences of any strikes on nuclear facilities.

Trump said over the weekend that the US would "obliterate" Iran's power plants unless the country releases its stranglehold on the Strait of Hormuz, a deadline that would have expired late Monday Washington time.

Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard had promised retaliation if Trump made good on his threat, saying Iran would hit power plants supplying electricity to American bases, "as well as the economic, industrial and energy infrastructures in which Americans have shares."

Bengaluru-Mysuru Infrastructure Corridor Area Planning Authority
No. 5, Second Floor, Looplane, Race Course Road, Bengaluru - 560 009
Tel : 080 22341230/35 E-mail: bmicapa@gmail.com

No: No:BMICAPA/CLU-02/09/2025-26/2874 Date: 23.03.2026

PUBLICATION

(UNDER SEC 14(A) OF KTCP ACT, 1961)

Sri M.Shanthakumar S/o Munikrishnappa and Sri M.Jagadeesh S/o Munikrishnappa have applied to this Authority seeking Change of land use from **"Agriculture"** Zone to **"Residential"** purpose pertaining to Sy.No:323 extent of 07Acre-26Guntas of Kodiyalakarenahalli Village, Bidadi Hobli, Ramanagara Taluk, Bengaluru South District under Sec 14(A) of KTCP Act 1961. The foresaid lands are reserved for **Agriculture zone** in approved Master plan. Applicant has stated that the change of land use sought is in the interest of public by quoting the following;

1) By developing the layout in the above said land, the poor and middle Class people will get the sites for reasonable price.
2) During the development works of the layout there will be opportunity of employment for Local labourers.
3) Surrounding areas will be developed by developing the Layout in the above said lands.
4) By development of planned layout, the public are benefited with the civic amenities such as good roads, UGD, electrical facilities and parks etc.

Objections, if any, are invited from the public, any person may file his/her objection to Member Secretary, BMICAPA, Bengaluru in writing to the above address mentioned in this publication within 15 days from this notice. Any objections received after stipulated time will not be considered.

Sd/- Member Secretary B.M.I.C.A.P.A., Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/6403/AKAR/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Public Works Department
Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi

No/PWD/CKD DIV/AE-1/TENDER/2025-26/8841 DATE: 20/03/2026

Short term E-Tender Notification

Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi has invited item wise Short term e-Tenders from Eligible registered contractors for the works coming under the jurisdiction of Chikodi PWD Division 1 work under head of account 5054-KRDCL. Amount put to tender is Rs. 400.00 Lakhs.

Calendar of events: 1)Pre-bid meeting date: 26-03-2026 at 11.00 AM, at The O/o the under signed. 2)Last date for queries & clarifications : 27-03-2026 up to 5.30 PM

3) Last Date of Receipt of Bids : 30-03-2026 up to 5.00 PM

4)Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 01-04-2026 at 4.30 PM 5)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids"

6)If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.

For more information & forms of tender can be downloaded from kppp.karnataka.gov.in & departmental web site www.kpwd.gov.in. Further details can be collected from O/o Executive Engineer Public Works Dept.,Division Chikkodi during working hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikodi.

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-2133/KSMCA/2025-26

NOTICE INVITING APPICATIONS FOR ALLOTMENT OF SHOPS AT MAYABAZAR MADRAS ENGINEER GROUP & CENTRE, BANGALORE-560042

1. Commanding Officer, Depot Battalion, Madras Engineer Group and Centre Bangalore-42 invites applications for allotment of various regimental shops on rental basis located in Mayabazar, Meanee Line. Shops would be allotted to highest bidder based on under mentioned priority in descending order.-
   a. War widows/ widows of defense personnel killed while on duty.
   b. Disabled Soldiers.
   c. Ex-Servicemen.
   d. Spouse/ widow of Ex-Servicemen.
2. Details of shops and sequence of auction are as under :-

Sl.No.	Shop Presently Used as	Shop No	Purpose for Allotment	Area (In Sq Ft)	Location
1.	Cobbler Equipment repair Shop	T-203/04	Cobbler Eqpt Repair Shop	7.80386	Mayabazar Complex
2.	School Books & Stationary	T-203/05	School Books & Stationary	8.45418	
3.	Tailor Shop	T-203/6	Tailor Shop	19.3238	
4.	Juice Shop	T-203/07	Juice Shop	25.3525	
5.	Fruit/Veg Shop	T-203/08	Fruit/Veg Shop	28.6141	
6.	Grocery / Vegetable Shop	T-203/10	Grocery Shop	13.2851	
7.	Boot maker/ footwear	T-203/11	Sweets Shop	14.4929	
8.	Wet Canteen	T-203/12	Wet Canteen	16.684	
9.	Scooter/Cycle shop including hiring facility	T-203/13	Scooter/Cycle shop including hiring facility	7.80386	
10.	Ladies Beauty Parlour	T-203/14	Ladies Tailor Shop	14.2142	
11.	Bakery Shop	T-203/15	Bakery Shop	16.7225	
12.	Restaurant (Vetri Café)	T-142A	Restaurant (Vetri Café)	37.4487	MSI Complex

3. Application form (at no cost) may be obtained from reception of Main Gate, Madras Engineer Group & Centre, Bangalore-42 as per following details:-
   a. Issue of Application form : 30 Mar 2026 to 07 Apr 2026 (from 0900 hours to 1700 hours).
   b. Date of receipt of application form : 09 Apr 2026 to 14 Apr 2026 (upto 1000 hours).
4. Auction of shops will be carried out on 20 Apr 2026 at 1000hrs at Chokalingam Hall, Depot Battalion, Madras Engineer Group and Centre as per Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).
5. If there are no successful bidders for any shop, the re-auction will be conducted as under :-
   a. Issue of Application form : 04 May 2026 to 11 May 2026 (from 0900 hours to 1700 hours)
   b. Date of receipt of application form : 18 May 2026 to 25 May 2026 (upto 1000 hours).
6. Detailed instructions on eligibility and terms and conditions be read carefully before applying.
7. The applicant must follow all directions mentioned in the terms and conditions, will be liable for penalty for any wrong assumption/ ignorance of the directions as attached with application form.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರೂರಲ್ ಇನ್‌ಫ್ರಾಸ್ಟ್ರಕ್ಚರ್ ಡೆವಲಪ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಲಿಮಿಟೆಡ್
KARNATAKA RURAL INFRASTUCTURE DEVELOPMENT LTD.
(Formerly Karnataka Land Army Corporation Limited)
No.1106, 10th Main Road, RPC Layout, Vijayanagar, Bengaluru - 560040

No.EE-4/KRIDL/TENDER/2025-26/1287 Dated:23.03.2026

E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

On behalf of Managing Director, KRIDL, Executive Engineer, BBMP Division-4, invites e-tender through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (KPPP) for the works with Tender Reference No.(KRIDL/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT 43, 45 and 46 respectively) under two cover system with Approximate Project cost for each works amounting to Rs.995.00 Lakhs and EMD Amount of Rs.13.50 Lakhs. Interested Contractors/Firms who wish to participate in the tender can view, download and apply only through KPPP https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. The schedule of specified Tenders are as under;

Tender Publish Date	**23.03.2026**
Last date and time for online queries	**30.03.2026, 17:30**
Date and time for Pre-Bid Meeting	**02.04.2026, 11:30**
Last date and time for receipt of tender	**13.04.2026, 15:00**
Date of Opening of Technical Bid & Time	**15.04.2026, 15:30**
Date of Opening of Financial Bid & Time	**22.04.2026, 15:30**

For more information,visit **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Executive Engineer-4
KRIDL, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/6400/CCL/2025-26

ಉಪ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ,
ಅರಣ್ಯ ಇಲಾಖೆ
ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಿಭಾಗ,
ಅರಣ್ಯ ಭವನ, ಅಶೋಕಪುರಂ, ಮೈಸೂರು
ದೂ: 0821–2481159, email:dcfwlmys@gmail.com
ದಿನಾಂಕ: 17.03.2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಅಧಿನಿಯಮ 2000 ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಮೈಸೂರು ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಿಭಾಗದ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯ ಮೇಲುಕೋಟೆ ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಲಾತ್ಮಕ ಆರ್ಚನೊಂದಿಗೆ ಕಾಂಪೌಂಡ್ ವಾಲ್, ಗೆಸ್ಟ್ ಹೌಸ್ ರಿಪೇರಿ, ಕಲ್ಲು ಬೋರ್ಡ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಅಳವಡಿಸುವುದು (Granite) ಮತ್ತು ದ್ವೀಪ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಹಾಗೂ ಮೈಸೂರು ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಲಾಂಟಾನ ಕಳೆ ತೆಗೆದು ಹುಲ್ಲುಗಾವಲು ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಮತ್ತು ಗೇಬಿನ್ ರಚನೆಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ದ್ವೀಪಗಳ ಬಲವರ್ದನೆ ಮಾಡುವುದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಿದ್ದು, ಆಸಕ್ತಿವುಳ್ಳ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ/ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುವ ದಿ: 02.04.2026 ರಂದು 16.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ, ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ಡುಗಳನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯಲು ದಿ: 04.04.2026 ರಂದು 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಹಾಗೂ ಷರತ್ತುಗಳನ್ನು ಅಂತರ್ಜಾಲದ ಮೂಲಕ ವೆಬ್ಸೈಟ್ ವಿಳಾಸ http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ರಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಉಪ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ, ವನ್ಯಜೀವಿ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮೈಸೂರು

DIPR/DDMYS/1858/KSMCA/1052/2025-26

Government of Karnataka
KARNATAKA MEDICAL COLLEGE AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE, HUBBALLI - 580021.
Ph : (O) 0836-2373348, Fax :0836-2373724
No. KMCRI/EST(1)A/Backlog/326/2025-26 Dated : 23-03-2026

NOTIFICATION

Applications are invited from SC/ST eligible candidates for the following backlog posts i.e. Professor / Asst. Professor. The candidates are advised to fill the application in the prescribed form and submit as indicated in the KMCRI website.

https: //kmcrihubballi.karnataka.gov.in

The last date for submission of duly filled application form with all necessary documents and Fees is 07-04-2026.

No.	Cadre	Department	Posts	Roster
01	Professor	Endocrinology	02	SC-1
		Radiotherapy		ST-1
02	Assistant Professor	Vascular Surgery	05	ST(PH)-01
		Forensic Medicine		ST(EX)-01
		Physical Medicine Rehabilitation		ST(R)-02
		Community Medicine		ST(KM)-01
		General Surgery		

For more details contact **https: //kmcrihubballi.karnataka.gov.in**
Sd/- Director,
Karnataka Medical College & Research Institute, Hubballi

POWER COMPANY OF KARNATAKA LIMITED
(Government of Karnataka undertaking) (CIN: U40101KA2007SGC043640)
4th Floor, INDHANA BHAVANA, Race Course Road Bengaluru - 560009.

No. PCKL/AD(P)/JD(P)/DD(Civil)/2025-26/7894 Date: 23.03.2026

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPPP mode only)

PCKL Invites tender for Hiring Vehicles Services through KPP Portal

Name of the work	EMD Amount in Rs.
Hiring of three (03) no's of Innova Vehicles for the Office use in PCKL, Indhana Bhavana, Bangalore.	23,000/-

Further details of the tender can be obtained from website: **https://www.pckl.karnataka.gov.in** or **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on hyperlink "e-Procurement (KPPP Portal)" from **24.03.2026.** The last date for submission of bid in KPP Portal is on or before **07.04.2026.**

Note: Any charges, addendum, corrigendum will be notified in e-Procurement only, and will not be published in newspaper.

Sd/-
Additional Director (Projects)
PCKL, Bengaluru

We will launch the fight against the evil force DMK and its partners who have taken TN to difficult times due to their incompetent management of economy
Political Theatre
During the last few years, politics in the state has stooped to a very low level, for which we feel ashamed when we are in other parts of the country

Poll vault

Vote optics

Oncologist Saradwat Mukhopadhyay had a fish dangling from his fingers as he moved from one shop to another in a market in Bidhannagar in Kolkata, seeking votes. He was keen to drive home the point that, if voted to power in West Bengal, the BJP, contrary to the 'propaganda' by its political rivals, would not take fish or other non-veg delicacies off Bengali menus. He is not alone in trying to be all things to all people. Minakshi Mukhopadhyay, the firebrand CPM leader, set aside Karl Marx's "religion is the opium of the people" doctrine and poured ghee into the flames of a yajna while campaigning in Uttarpara. Her party colleague, Kalatan Dasgupta, commenced his campaign in Panihati after offering prayers at a temple. Meanwhile, the Trinamool candidate, Partha Hazari, entered the kitchen of a prospective voter in Pursurah and made rotis on a clay oven after the household ran out of cooking gas.

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK, KOLKATA

Name game

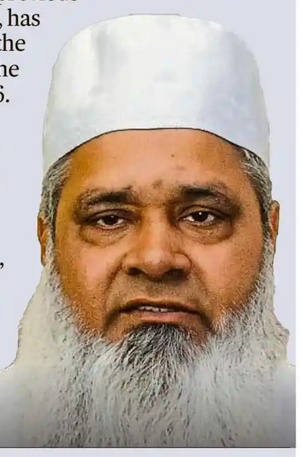
As nominations closed for the Kerala Assembly elections on Monday, several candidates are grappling with namesakes in their constituencies. Among them are P V Anvar, P Rajeev, V K Prasanth, Praveen Kumar K and Thomas Unniyadan. Anvar, contesting from Beypore against Tourism Minister P A Muhammad Riyas, faces four namesakes. Similar instances have emerged in Kalamassery, Thiruvambady, Vattiyoorkavu and Koyilandy, where candidates share identical or similar names. More such cases may surface as nomination data is still being uploaded. However, after scrutiny and withdrawals, many of these namesake candidates are expected to exit the fray.

PTI

Meet the leader

Badruddin Ajmal
AIUDF
Binnakandi, Cachar district

Once an influential face in Assam politics, Badruddin Ajmal has, in effect, become politically "untouchable", with the Opposition Congress rejecting his party's overtures for an alliance and the ruling BJP repeatedly targeting it as a party of "Bangladeshi infiltrators" ahead of the Assembly polls on April 9. Formed in 2005, the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) once emerged as the second-largest party in the state, winning 18 Assembly seats and securing three of the 14 Lok Sabha seats in 2014. Cut to 2024, Ajmal lost the Dhubri seat to Rakibul Hussain of the Congress after a 15-year hold. With Ajmal's sheen in state politics gradually fading, at least four MLAs have quit the party to join others. The AIUDF is now contesting just 27 seats, fewer than in previous elections. Ajmal, 70, has also been fielded in the Assembly polls for the first time since 2006. This time, however, he has been shifted from his traditional South Salmara constituency in western Assam to the relatively "safer" Binnakandi seat in his home district of Hojai in central Assam.



Trivia

Syeda Anwara Taimur was the first Muslim woman to become the chief minister of any Indian state. She served as Assam's CM at the height of the anti-migrant movement led by the All Assam Students Union. Her tenure lasted just seven months, with the Centre eventually imposing President's Rule in the state. A four-time Congress MLA, Taimur also held ministerial positions in several Congress govts in Assam. A graduate of Aligarh Muslim University, she taught Economics at a college in Jorhat before entering politics. She was later nominated to the Rajya Sabha for two terms, and eventually left the Congress to join Badruddin Ajmal's AIUDF.

In Kerala, Congress acts as B-team for communal forces: CM Vijayan

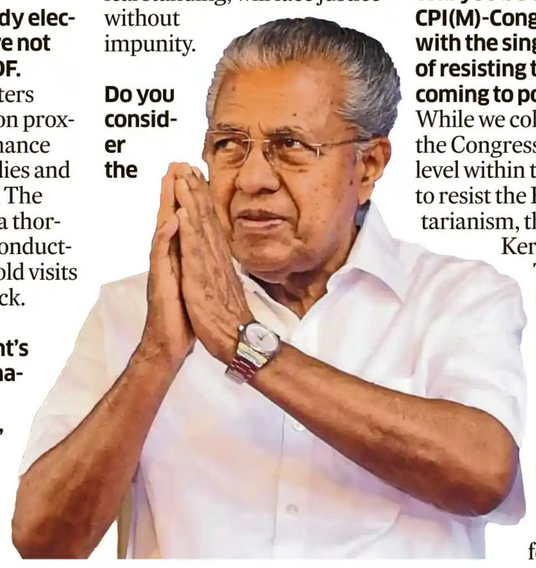
Dubbing the Congress a "B-team of communal forces", Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the CPM cannot have any truck with a party that lacks ideological moorings to challenge the RSS locally. In an interview with *DH*'s **Arjun Raghunath**, the veteran Left leader made it clear that any collaboration with the Congress within the I.N.D.I.A bloc at the national level is limited to resisting the BJP's authoritarianism. Excerpts:

The Left Democratic Front (LDF) retained power in 2021. What is your expectation in this election?
We are looking forward to a resounding victory. Our confidence stems from the state government's track record over the past 10 years — redefining governance through comprehensive welfare measures, committed interventions to improve infrastructure and strengthening the public sector. The people of Kerala value harmony and peace over communal hate-mongering and opportunism.

Why should people vote for the LDF again when many argue that consecutive rule by the same party is not good for democracy?
We respectfully disagree with such arguments. Any government or dispensation should be judged by its sincerity in keeping promises. The LDF government has successfully delivered on all its commitments.

In the recent local body elections, the results were not favourable for the LDF.
In local body polls, voters usually decide based on proximity and the performance of individual local bodies and their representatives. The LDF has undertaken a thorough introspection, conducting extensive household visits and collecting feedback.

Will your government's stand on the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple women's entry issue, as well as the gold theft allegations, affect the prospects of the LDF?
It is incorrect to say that we made a somersault regarding women's entry. We have maintained that such issues must be resolved through dialogue with religious leaders, scholars and the clergy, and we stand by that position. As for the Sabarimala gold theft case, it is currently under investigation by the Special Investigation Team. Those found guilty, regardless of their socio-political standing, will face justice without impunity.



Do you consider the BJP a major opponent, at least in some seats?
The BJP remains a marginal force that relies on divisive rhetoric. While they may create a temporary impact in a handful of pockets through communal polarisation, Kerala's social fabric is too strong to accommodate a "third alternative" built on exclusion.

Will you be open to a CPI(M)-Congress alliance with the single-point agenda of resisting the BJP from coming to power in Kerala?
While we collaborate with the Congress at the national level within the I.N.D.I.A bloc to resist the BJP's authoritarianism, the situation in Kerala is different. The Congress in Kerala often acts as a B-team for communal forces and lacks a clear ideological roadmap to counter the RSS locally. Therefore, an alliance in Kerala is not feasible.

Kerala BJP seal on EC letter triggers row; one suspended

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: A seal of the Kerala unit of the BJP on a letter from the Election Commission (EC) has triggered strong reactions from the CPM and the Congress.

Kerala Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Rathan Kelkar issued a clarification that it was a clerical error, and that the letter had already been withdrawn. An assistant section officer dealing with the file in the CEO's office had been placed under suspension pending enquiry, he added.

KERALA
Assembly Poll

A 2019 communication on frequently asked questions (FAQs) on criminal antecedents of candidates, sent from the Kerala CEO's office to political parties on March 21, had the Kerala BJP seal. Sharing copies of the letter, the Kerala CPM said in a social media post that it was yet another instance of the EC and the BJP being controlled by the same power centre.

The Congress asked in a social media post whether the EC was operating out of the BJP's office or it was the BJP's letter to all electoral officers on the CEO's letterhead.

The Kerala CEO clarified that a BJP delegation had come to his office seeking certain clarifications on the FAQs. The 2019 FAQ letter with their seal was included in the memorandum submitted.

Some officials at the CEO office mailed it to all political parties by mistake said Kelkar.

Assam Congress eyes image rejig

Gaurav Gogoi, team try to display 'secular, inclusive' card

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

With delimitation reducing Muslim-dominant constituencies to 22 from 30-35 before 2023 and the BJP's constant efforts to tag it "pro-Muslim", the Congress in Assam seems to be in an image-makeover mode as it looks to return to power after 10 years in the April 9 Assembly elections.

ASSAM
Assembly Poll

Gaurav Gogoi and his team are trying to display the "secular, inclusive" card with steps like severing ties with the Badruddin Ajmal-led AIUDF to stitching an alliance with Raijor Dal and the Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP), two anti-BJP regional parties.

"Our target is not just to return to power but to establish a new bor Asom (greater Assam), where people of all religions and communities can live in peace, unity, and without fear," said Gaurav on Monday, soon after filing his nomination from Jorhat. Gaurav is contesting the Assembly polls for the first time.

The 2023 delimitation exercise in Assam came as a worry for Gaurav ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Kaliabor, a Lok Sabha seat from where he was elected in 2014 and 2019, was removed and the demography redrawn. This left the Congress with no option but to field him from neighbouring Jorhat. Gaurav, however, surprised many by defeating sitting BJP MP Topon Kumar Gogoi.

Encouraged by Gaurav's success, the Congress appointed him as its state chief in May 2025, replacing Bhupen Kumar Borah, under whose leadership it had lost the 2021 Assembly polls.

Gaurav is an Ahom, an indigenous community having influence in several Assembly constituencies. His decisions, including on issues related to alliances with the Raijor Dal and the AJP, led to the resignation of two top leaders, Nagaon MP Pradyut Bordoloi and Borah, both of whom joined the BJP, weeks ahead of the polls.

The Congress has also given one ticket to the All-Party Hills Leaders Conference, which has a support base in the tribal-dominated Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao districts.

All these moves, according to Congress insiders, are a part of the Congress' image-makeover mission and a course correction to recapture votes in Upper Assam, where the BJP has made inroads since 2016.

TVK fields 28 candidates in Puducherry

CHENNAI, DHNS: Actor Vijay's Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK), which will make its debut in electoral politics, has fielded two sitting MLAs, including one from the BJP, and three former legislators for the April 9 elections to the Puducherry Assembly.

Vijay has fielded candidates, including two women, in 28 constituencies in the Union Territory, while allotting two seats to Neyam Makkal Kazhagam, a little-known organisation. Six of the 28 candidates announced by Vijay were recently or previously associated with the BJP and AIADMK.

A K Sai J Saravanan Kumar, who was a minister in the outgoing N Rangaswamy government, and independent MLA Prakash Kumar, who recently supported the AINRC-BJP combine, were fielded from Thirubhuvanam and Muthialpet, respectively.

Can Vijay's fan clubs give TVK a pride of place at Fort St George?

Scan QR code to read story

Congress, DMK finalise seat deal in Puducherry

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

The Congress and DMK finally concluded their seat-sharing talks for the April 9 Assembly polls in Puducherry, with the Congress contesting 16 seats and the DMK 14, including two allotted to allies.

PUDUCHERRY
Assembly Poll

Since a formal agreement was delayed until Monday evening, Congress and DMK candidates filed nomination papers in all 30 constituencies. They will now withdraw from the seats allocated to alliance partners.

"As per the deal, the Congress will contest 16 seats, while the DMK has been allotted 14 seats to be shared between the party and smaller allies," senior DMK leader S Jagathrakshakan told reporters in Puducherry.

The agreement was signed after a week of hectic negotiations with no resolution in sight. The numbers were finalised on Sunday night after senior Congress leader P Chidambaram met Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin, though differences over specific seats persisted.

Puducherry Congress chief and Lok Sabha MP V Vaithilingam will be the face of the Congress-DMK alliance and will take on incumbent Chief Minister N Rangaswamy in the Thattanchavadi constituency of the Union Territory. The rivalry between Vaithilingam and Rangaswamy dates back to their days together in the Congress, when the former led a rebellion against the latter and succeeded him as CM in September 2008.

He is likely to be the CM if the Congress-DMK alliance wins the polls.

Former CM V Narayanaswamy was also keen to enter the electoral race, but the party allotted a seat to his daughter and asked him to withdraw. Congress sources told *DH* that the party was clear that Vaithilingam had to be projected as the CM candidate to turn the tide in its favour.

TAMIL NADU PACT

Union Minister Piyush Goyal along with AIADMK chief Edappadi K Palaniswami, PMK MP Anbumani Ramadoss and others join hands during a press conference ahead of the Tamil Nadu Assembly Elections, at the party headquarter in Chennai, on Monday. PTI

INSIDE TROUBLE

One family, two voices: Ghosh relents, wife rebels

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK
KOLKATA, DHNS

Both were pouty. He, however, seems to have shaken it off, while she remains unrelenting and has now begun to vent her displeasure.

Dilip Ghosh, veteran BJP leader in West Bengal, came around after the party nominated him from his favourite constituency, Kharagpur Sadar, and following a public display of courtesy by Prime Minister Narendra Modi through friendly banter. This persuaded him to pause his subtle salvos against Suvendu Adhikari, the saffron party's de facto CM face in the state, and others who joined after quitting the Trinamool Congress.

But Ghosh's wife Rinku Majumdar, herself a BJP worker, has now gone public with her disappointment at the party for not yet accepting her request for a ticket to contest the elections.

Dilip Ghosh

The BJP state headquarters in Kolkata on Sunday witnessed protests by party workers from Hingalganj, who raised slogans opposing the candidature of Rekha Patra.

Soon after the BJP nominated him as its candidate in Kharagpur Sadar, Ghosh (61) began campaigning against the TMC's Pradeep Sarkar.

Majumdar, however, has targeted the BJP's state leaders, alleging hypocrisy over the party's 'One-Family-One-Ticket' policy. She alleged that the norm — cited to reject her plea for a nomination from the Rajarhat New Town constituency in Kolkata — was violated when tickets were given to Adhikari to contest from Bhavanipur and Nandigram, and to his brother Soumendu Adhikari in Egra.

WEST BENGAL
Assembly Poll

Majumdar visited the BJP headquarters and conveyed her grievances to the party's state leaders. "Our party has always taken a stand against dynastic politics. But here in West Bengal, we have seen several cases of more than one person from the same family being given tickets by our party itself," she told journalists.

She alleged that people accused of financial scams or those who had previously lost elections were still declared as BJP candidates.

At Rajarhat New Town, the BJP fielded Piyush Kanodia, turning down Majumdar's plea for a nomination.

"She is a BJP karyakarta like me and has every right to seek a ticket. She did apply for the party's candidature," said Ghosh, adding, "It is the party's prerogative to decide on such applications."

Ghosh, a former RSS pracharak, married Majumdar on April 18, 2025.

At a recent BJP rally, PM Modi exchanged pleasantries with Ghosh and, in jest, asked why he had not sent him sweets on the occasion of his wedding.

Ghosh had earlier led the BJP as its West Bengal unit chief during the 2021 Assembly polls, which established the saffron party as the principal challenger to the ruling TMC. The BJP's tally rose from just three seats in the 294-member Assembly in 2016 to 77 in 2021.

Over the past four years, Suvendu Adhikari — who quit the TMC to join the BJP ahead of the 2021 polls — has emerged as the saffron party's most prominent face in West Bengal.

Relations between Ghosh and Adhikari soured after the veteran leader was asked to contest from the Bardhaman-Durgapur Lok Sabha constituency in the 2024 parliamentary elections, instead of Medinipur, where he had won in 2019.

According to party insiders, Adhikari played a key role in shifting Ghosh's constituency, a move that ultimately saw him lose to Kirti Azad of the TMC.

EC publishes first supplementary list after SIR adjudications in WB

KOLKATA, PTI: The Election Commission issued the first supplementary voters' list after SIR adjudications in poll-bound West Bengal on Monday night, an official said.

The lists for each booth were made available on the EC's website around 11.55 pm, he said.

CEO Manoj Kumar Agarwal had said on Monday evening that around 29 lakh names have been adjudicated so far

Around 60 lakh names were marked as "under adjudication" in the final voters' list published on February 28. Following that, 705 judicial officers were engaged to determine whether these names would be kept or deleted from the electoral rolls.

The supplementary list contains the names of those voters whose cases have been adjudicated by these judicial officers.

Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Manoj Kumar Agarwal had said in the evening that around 29 lakh names have been adjudicated so far.

It was not immediately known how many of these names were kept in the first supplementary list and how many were deleted. Many reported that, though the list was made available, it could not be downloaded.

More lists will be published as the adjudication process progresses, officials said.

Agarwal said the supplementary list would be available on multiple official platforms, including the websites of the CEO and the Election Commission, besides the ECI Net mobile application.

Security has been tightened across the state in view of the publication of the list.

Polling for the 294-member Assembly will be held on April 23 and 29, with counting scheduled for May 4.

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

SC ruling expands idea of motherhood

By striking down a rule that denied maternity leave to women who adopted children older than three months, the Supreme Court has corrected a legal wrong and endorsed a more inclusive idea of parenthood. The rule was part of the Code on Social Security, 2020, which was derived from the Maternity Benefits Act. A bench of Justice J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan ruled that adoptive mothers are eligible for paid maternity leave for 12 weeks, just as natural mothers, irrespective of the child's age. The distinction the rule made between natural and adoptive mothers did not have a rationale and arose from a sense that adoption could not be equated with natural motherhood. The Court rejected this prejudiced view.

It asserted that motherhood cannot be defined solely on biological terms. A mother's emotional requirements and responses cannot be differentiated based on the age of the adopted child. The earlier restrictions were imposed by ignoring this reality. For an adopted child in a new environment, the physical proximity and care of her mother are essential. As the petitioner, Hamsaanandini Nanduri, contended, the process of adoption often takes more than three months, making the maternity leave provision inaccessible for most of the mothers. While this is a practical problem, the larger issue entails what adoption means to the parents and how it has been recognised by law. The government told the Court that once a child was three months old, there was no "intensive dependency" on the mother as earlier, making it easier for her to resume work. This view was considered narrow and restrictive by the Court. The child needs nurturing, care, and emotional bonding throughout their formative years. Maternity leave is not the employer's concession; it is the employee's and her child's right. With the ruling, the apex court has expanded the jurisprudence of women's rights and equality in all situations.

The end of discriminatory maternity leave rules marks equal legal recognition for adoptive mothers

The Court has also made a case for an extended paternity leave regime. It noted that the early months of a child's life are irretrievable and a father's absence during this crucial period may have lasting developmental consequences. Observing that 15 days of paternity leave for government employees is inadequate, the Court said the government may consider legislation recognising paternity leave as a social security benefit. The judgment is significant for its view on the equal status of maternity, whether natural or adoptive, and the gender-neutral idea of parenting, which has yet to gain full legal recognition.

Custodial torture and the missing law

Nearly four decades after the sensational Rasheed custodial death case, in which a young advocate was abducted, tortured, and killed, and the then Home Minister was arraigned before eventually being acquitted, Karnataka continues to grapple with the same stain: deaths inside police custody. The latest flashpoint is the death of 50-year-old Kantharaju at Huliyaru police station in Tumakuru, the district to which Home Minister G Parameshwara belongs. He was picked up by plainclothesmen during Ugadi festivities on suspicion of gambling. Kantharaju's family alleges he was brutally assaulted; the police attribute his death to a cardiac episode. He was shifted to a nearby hospital, where he was declared "brought dead". As per established protocol, the case has been handed over to the Criminal Investigation Department, and a judicial inquiry will follow. Yet, whether the cause is medical or custodial torture, the deeper issue remains unchanged: citizens are dying in custody.

This points to systemic failure rather than isolated excess. Torture endures because policing remains confession-centric. India's severe shortage of forensic experts leaves investigators overly reliant on extracting admissions rather than building evidence. Technological safeguards are patchy: closed-circuit television cameras, mandated by the Supreme Court, are often non-functional or poorly maintained, conveniently failing at critical moments. Meanwhile, conviction rates in custodial death cases remain abysmally low, fostering a culture of impunity. When prosecutions collapse, and witnesses turn hostile, deterrence evaporates. Existing safeguards, though robust on paper, suffer in execution. Judicial inquiries, National Human Rights Commission reporting, and videographed post-mortems are mandatory, but delays and witness inconsistencies dilute their impact. Policing itself lacks functional specialisation; the same officer juggles law and order duties with criminal investigation, leaving little room for professional evidence-gathering. Crucially, India lacks a standalone law that defines and criminalises custodial torture, despite long-standing international commitments. While India signed the United Nations Convention Against Torture (UNCAT) in 1997, the country has yet to ratify it.

Reform must entail an exclusive anti-torture legal framework and a shift to scientific evidence gathering

Reform, therefore, must move beyond ritualistic responses. Accountability for non-functional cameras cannot stop at the station house officer; it must extend to supervisory ranks – Superintendents of Police and Deputy Commissioners – with consequences for lapses. The long-pending need for a specific anti-torture law must be addressed, codifying liability and closing legal ambiguities. Courts must adopt a sterner posture, ensuring swift trials and exemplary punishment. This is not merely about an individual official's misconduct but of institutional lapse. Only when India decisively shifts from coercion to scientific investigation, backed by robust anti-torture laws and hierarchical accountability, will custodial torture become history.

A PAUSE FOR TALKS

Enough: A war where everyone loses

The conflict's costs are mounting. India should leverage its strategic neutrality for dialogue and de-escalation

GURUCHARAN GOLLERKERI

The West Asia conflict is no longer a distant war; it is a global destabiliser. What began as a strategic confrontation has drifted into something dangerous – an open-ended conflict – where civilian lives and critical infrastructure have become routine targets. There can be no winners in this war. It is a negative-sum game in which every participant, and the world at large, is losing. It is time to say, unequivocally: enough.

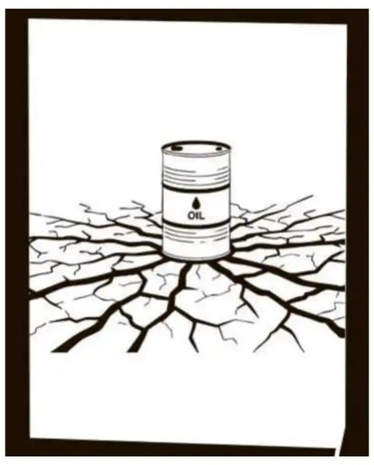
Unlike conventional conflicts, this war destroys value across economic, political, and human dimensions, leaving every actor worse off. The United States, already grappling with fiscal pressures, is committing billions to military deployments. Israel, despite its military superiority, faces sustained security threats and economic disruption. Iran, already in a deep economic crisis, is further weakened. The Gulf states confront rising insecurity and capital flight risks. And beyond the region, the global economy absorbs the resulting energy shockwaves.

The economic consequences are immediate and measurable. Energy markets, sensitive to geopolitical instability, have shown sustained upward price volatility, with even a $10-15 per barrel increase transmitting quickly into inflation, fiscal stress, and reduced household purchasing power across energy-importing economies. For India, which imports nearly 85% of its crude oil, such increases can widen the current account deficit by an estimated 0.3-0.4% of GDP.

The International Monetary Fund has repeatedly warned that geopolitical fragmentation is a structural driver of persistent inflation. We are thus confronted with the spectre of stagflation, a toxic combination of low growth and high inflation. Supply chains, already fragile after the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, are under renewed strain. Even moderate disruptions to energy flows from the Gulf can shave off meaningful portions of global GDP growth. For economies like India, which have worked hard to stabilise macroeconomic fundamentals, such external shocks are profoundly destabilising.

Yet the economic costs, severe as they are, pale in comparison to the human costs. Wars of this nature do not remain confined to battlefields; they spill into cities, homes, and everyday life. Civilian casualties mount, infrastructure is destroyed, and entire communities are displaced. The long-term consequences – psychological trauma, disrupted education, and lost livelihoods – create generational scars. As the United Nations has repeatedly noted, civilians account for the overwhelming majority of casualties in modern conflicts.

Social cohesion within affected societies frays. Polarisation deepens, dissent is often curtailed in the name of national security, and democratic spaces shrink. Diaspora communities experience heightened tensions, sometimes spilling into social unrest far from the conflict zone.



Politically, the conflict entrenches hardline positions. Negotiation becomes politically costly; compromise is framed as weakness. Leaders on all sides risk becoming prisoners of their own rhetoric, narrowing the space for de-escalation.

This raises a fundamental question: if the costs are so evident, why does the conflict persist? The answer lies in a combination of strategic miscalculation, domestic political compulsions, and the absence of credible mediators who command trust across all parties. Traditional diplomatic channels are either exhausted or viewed with suspicion. What is needed is an intervention that is both credible and constructive: one that can reframe the conflict and break the cycle of escalation.

India's voice is crucial

This is where India must step forward. India's stakes are neither abstract nor distant. Nearly nine million Indians live and work in the Gulf region, and the country's energy security is deeply tied to West Asia. Prolonged instability directly affects India's inflation trajectory, fiscal stability, and growth prospects. Energy prices, trade flows, and the welfare of its diaspora are all intimately linked to the region's stability. India is not merely an observer; it is a directly affected stakeholder.

At the same time, India's diplomatic positioning is uniquely advantageous. It maintains strategic partnerships with the US, longstanding civilisational and diplomatic ties with Iran, and expanding economic and technological cooperation with Israel. It also enjoys deep engagement with the Gulf states, anchored in energy interdependence and labour mobility. Few countries possess this breadth of relationships; fewer still are perceived as relatively neutral and non-hegemonic.

India's consistent emphasis on strategic autonomy, dialogue, and peaceful resolution lends credibility to any mediation effort it undertakes. Recent diplomatic engagements have demonstrated India's ability to build consensus in a fragmented world. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has demonstrated the capacity to engage across geopolitical divides. His outreach has spanned Washington, Tehran, Tel Aviv, and the Gulf capitals, often balancing competing interests with pragmatic diplomacy. This positions him uniquely to initiate a dialogue that others cannot.

However, mediation is about framing. India must articulate the conflict not in terms of competing claims, but in terms of shared losses. The narrative must shift decisively from 'who gains' to 'everyone loses.' This reframing is essential to create political space for de-escalation. India can convene a structured dialogue – formal or back-channel – focused on three immediate priorities: cessation of hostilities, humanitarian access, and a roadmap for sustained negotiation. Critics may argue that India risks diplomatic overreach. Yet the greater risk lies in inaction. Proactive diplomacy is a strategic necessity. The moral argument is equally compelling. In an era increasingly defined by transactional geopolitics, there is an urgent need for voices that appeal to shared humanity. India, with its civilisational ethos rooted in dialogue, coexistence, and restraint, can offer that voice. It can remind the world that power must ultimately serve peace, not perpetuate conflict.

"Enough" is not merely an expression of fatigue; it is a call to responsibility. It is a recognition that the costs – economic, social, and human – are too great to bear. The war must stop. Hostilities must cease. Dialogue must begin. History will judge this moment not by the intensity of the war, but by the courage to end it.

The world does not need another spectator; it needs a credible mediator. India can, and must, step into that role. Enough must mean something.

(The writer is Director, School of Social Sciences, Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Exam (eu)stress in the school of life

Years after leaving school, exam season returns—with roles reversed

ASHA JOSEPH

It is 11.30 pm, and I am wide awake. Not because of a deadline, not because of work, but because I am helping my child finish the last worksheet before her exam. As she sits there practising her poem with half-open eyes and dramatic sighs, I suddenly realise something profound: I have spent a significant portion of my life studying late at night—school, college and now... midlife. The only difference is that now I am not a student. I am the official night-shift exam companion.

Watching her rehearse her poem instantly transports me back to my school days and the annual epidemic known as exam fever.

Our science teacher, Pandey Sir, was the undisputed chief physician of this condition. An excellent teacher, he was not only brilliant in science but also a master of life skills.

His famous declaration would arrive every December:

"All of you start preparing for your finals right away. Otherwise, January will jump away... February will fade away... March will march away... and April will fool you!"

This guidance (warning, if I may say) would appear right in the middle of the Christmas season, long before exams were even visible on the horizon, when our primary plans involved cakes, holidays and absolutely no books. Yet Pandey Sir's words were enough to jolt us back to academic reality. As sincere *chelas* of our guru, we would return home and begin studying, at least for 10 minutes.

But the real battle was never about studying. The real battle was waking up early. Alarm clocks never worked for us. Cuckoo clocks could cuckoo themselves, and we would still be asleep. Fortunately, our guru had a scientific solution: "Drink a full tummy of water before going to bed. You will definitely wake up early!"

Let us just say the method was extremely effective. Naturally!

Our history teacher, Kennedy Sir, was no less legendary. Long before I encountered the term 'eustress' in psychology books, he had already explained the concept in his own style:

"Exam pressure is good! Without exam pressure, none of you fellas would even open your books. So remember your mantra: Exam pressure is good!"

At the time, we were not entirely convinced. But looking back, those teachers did far more than complete the syllabus. And now, decades later, here I am.

My daughter finishes her poem and closes the book with the relief of a marathon runner.

I say gently, "Wake up a little early tomorrow and revise once more."

She looks at me with sleepy protest and replies, "Mama, it is very difficult to wake up."

Like a true disciple of my guru, I repeat the timeless wisdom of Pandey Sir, "Drink a full tummy of water and go to bed."

And just like that, the sacred exam-survival wisdom has officially been passed on to Gen Alpha.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The long shadow of caste

Honour killing, a deep-rooted phenomenon of inherent caste superiority prevalent in the northern belt of India, appears to have spread its malevolent effect to southern states, an irony in this era of technology and communication. It is unfortunate that Karnataka, a progressive state, has seen caste prejudices become more entrenched, leading to honour killings. Tamil Nadu's official data shows 'zero' cases, while independent groups have documented nearly 200 incidents. The statistics presented by the Karnataka Home Minister – 15 honour killings between 2021 and 2025, perhaps an underestimation – paints a grim picture. While Iva Nammava Bill, introduced by the state government, is a welcome step, what is more important is its effective implementation, thorough investigation and quick disposal of cases.
H R Bapu Satyanarayana, Mysuru

India must take the lead

The ongoing Israel-US-Iran conflict has plunged the global economy into distress. PM Modi's assurance in Parliament that India is largely shielded from its effects inspires hope, but the war shows no signs of abating even after 24 days. Today's world craves energy, and global leaders must focus on diplomacy. This war is a no-win situation, bringing destruction, loss of lives, and economic misery. India, a global peace player, should facilitate talks to end the conflict.
S Sundaresh, Bengaluru

Sustainable livelihood

I refer to '20 women, transgender get free electric autos' (Mar 23). Kudos to the initiative empowering women and transgenders with financial independence through free electric autos. The transport minister's foundation has distributed 20 electric autos and promised 10 more. The scheme offers subsidies for purchasing electric autos, aiming to train 1000 women by year-end.
Ivania Mary Willys, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

The (PM's) speech was long, but what do we have today, what arrangements are in place, how much stock do we have, where will we get it from for the future, will any deal have an impact, will we be able to buy oil from Russia?

Kumari Selja, Congress MP

Humphrey is not a man who gives straight answers. He gives long answers.

Sir Humphrey Appleby (Yes Minister)

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

A race to reclaim Bahujan memory

In UP, Kanshi Ram becomes the pivot in a contest for the Dalit vote, left fragmented amid the BSP's decline

MAHENDRA KUMAR SINGH

In politics, the contest is not only for votes but also for appropriating icons. Those who shape public memory often shape electoral outcomes. This truth is evident in Uttar Pradesh, where the legacy of politician and social reformer Kanshi Ram has become the centre of a new political struggle.

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has asked the government to confer the Bharat Ratna on Kanshi Ram, founder of the Bahujan Samaj Party, calling him a "symbol of empowerment and hope".

As Kanshi Ram symbolises the rise of Bahujan politics and Dalit assertion, Rahul Gandhi's demand appears aimed at reclaiming the social justice narrative and reconnecting with Bahujan voters amid the growing influence of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the declining strength of the BSP under Mayawati.

In UP, Dalits once formed a key pillar of the Congress's "umbrella coalition" of upper castes, minorities and Dalits that sustained its dominance for decades. This base began eroding in the late 1980s and early 1990s with the rise of identity politics and Kanshi Ram's mobilisation through the BSP. The Mandal-era churn further fragmented this coalition, enabling regional forces like the Samajwadi Party and BSP to reshape the state's electoral politics.

The demand is thus more than symbolic; it reflects Congress's attempt to widen its social base ahead of the 2027 Assembly polls and improve its bargaining position with the SP. SP chief Akhilesh Yadav backed the demand for Bharat Ratna while marking Kanshi Ram's birth anniversary. It may also be a joint strategy by Congress and the SP to project the I.N.D.I.A bloc as the political guardian of Dalit interests.

Mayawati attacked the move, saying the Congress never honoured B R Ambedkar with the Bharat Ratna and questioning its attempt to honour Kanshi Ram now. Targeting the SP, she invoked the 1995 State Guest House Incident to highlight what she calls the party's historic hostility toward Dalits.

The political context has changed dramatically. The BSP, which won a majority in the 2007 Assembly polls with over 30% vote share, has steadily declined: down to 12.7% and one MLA in the 2022 Assembly polls, and 9.3% with no seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

In UP, the Dalits are nearly 23% of the electorate, but are politically fragmented, especially after the BSP's decline. Jatavs, Mayawati's core vote base, make up about 12%, but the non-Jatavs have drifted to other parties. Today, Dalit votes are split among the BSP, the BJP, the SP-Congress, and Chandrashekhar Azad's Azad Samaj Party. This fragmentation has opened space for new strategies.

Beyond symbolism

Since 2014, the BJP has successfully attracted sections of non-Jatav Dalits through welfare schemes and Hindutva. The SP, long seen as a Yadav-Muslim party, now seeks to shed that image with an outreach to non-Yadav OBCs and non-Jatav Dalits. In the 2024 general elections, the SP-Congress alliance made significant gains, winning 37 seats, its best-ever performance. Candidate selection made the difference: fewer Yadavs and Muslims, more non-Yadav OBCs and Dalits.

Yet challenges remain. Without the Congress, the SP's ability to secure the Bahujan vote is limited. Memories of the SP's past actions, such as reversing district names honouring Dalit icons in 2012, complicate reconciliation efforts.

For Mayawati, the immediate challenge is more fundamental. Even her core Jatav base looks shaky. Internal turbulence, defections, and a weakened organisational network have created uncertainty. The Congress and SP's renewed emphasis on Kanshi Ram is thus part of a larger contest over Bahujan memory. It seeks moral legitimacy by associating with a leader who transformed Dalit identity into a powerful political force. A sharper tilt, however, risks consolidating upper-caste voters behind the BJP.

The future of Dalit politics in UP remains open. The BSP is weakened but not irrelevant. The SP is expanding but still faces credibility gaps, while the Congress is attempting a cautious revival to regain its lost Dalit base. The BJP has built a broad social coalition, but now faces the challenge of managing internal caste tensions that surfaced after the UGC guidelines debate.

As parties compete to claim the legacy of Kanshi Ram, the future belongs to those who can move beyond tokenism and offer real representation. The battle for symbols has begun. Whether this competition leads to meaningful power-sharing and succeeds in convincing Dalits will be the defining question on the road to 2027.

(The writer is a political commentator and teaches Political Science at DDU Gorakhpur University, Uttar Pradesh)

Integrated care: India must go beyond diagnosis in its fight against TB

ANURAG BHARGAVA AND MADHAVI BHARGAVA

Thirty-eight-year-old Sukhu, in a remote tribal village in Jharkhand, was given monthly food baskets in our RATIONS trial but, strangely, did not gain any weight. When we visited him to understand why, Sukhu had the answer: "I was found to have diabetes but was told to go to a community health centre 60 km away to start treatment. Without diabetes control, how will I gain weight?"

Shankar, 52, weighed only 31 kg, could not stand without support and had severe anaemia, breathlessness and low oxygen levels. These features, part of the screening tool we implemented in the RATIONS trial, helped health workers flag Shankar as being at high risk of death. They referred him immediately for inpatient care at the district hospital. He recovered remarkably with treatment of TB, anaemia and undernutrition.

Asif, who was being treated for lung TB at a primary health centre (PHC), brought his wife, the mother of a seven-month-old child. She was underweight and had fever, headache, vomiting, and drowsiness. She was later diagnosed with TB meningitis and had not received TB preventive treatment.

It is estimated that one-fifth of Indians harbour a TB infection, and 2.8 million develop TB disease annually, with more than 300,000 deaths. The development of TB disease depends not just on the presence of the TB germ but also on impaired immunity due to undernutrition, HIV, uncontrolled diabetes, alcohol, or tobacco use. These risk factors increase the risk of active TB, severe disease, death, and recurrence. The poor often find it challenging to adhere to the treatment, and families descend deeper into poverty and food insecurity due to the economic and social costs of the disease. Persons with TB often experience disability, recurrence, and higher mortality after successful treatment. More than 10% develop disease recurrence within two years in India.

These true-life stories illustrate that an effective model of TB care and prevention must be comprehensive and integrated, addressing not only the TB germ but also the clinical, social and health system dimensions.

Patients with TB often have coexisting controllable conditions such as undernutrition, diabetes, HIV, tobacco, and alcohol use, which are risk factors for disease and poor treatment outcomes. India has successfully integrated HIV screening and management in the TB programme, and a similar initiative for undernutrition, diabetes, and other risk factors is needed. India has the monthly direct benefit transfer under the Nikshay Poshan Yojana – with a monthly benefit of Rs 1,000– and the Nikshay Mitra Yojana for in-kind nutrition support to address undernutrition. However, these schemes face challenges of universal coverage and timely disbursement. Weight gains must be recorded and reported to assess the impact of these initiatives on TB treatment outcomes.

Like Sukhu, almost one in seven persons with TB have diabetes (one in two in Kerala) with poor rates of control. Better control of diabetes could prevent TB occurrence. Decentralised diabetes care at the PHC level – with trained primary care providers for diagnosis, counselling, initiation and follow-up care – along with brief interventions for substance use and mental health problems and efforts to address stigma and discrimination, will improve treatment outcomes, reduce deaths and recurrence, and reinforce faith in the programme. Historically, TB programmes have strengthened primary care by making diagnostic tests and therapy available at points of first contact; decentralised, integrated care of persons with TB could similarly make the detection and treatment of non-communicable diseases more accessible.

Patients do not die of tuberculosis *per se*, but of severe disease and its complications; care must therefore be differentiated as per disease severity. Screening at diagnosis for high-risk features (very severe undernutrition, inability to stand, severe anaemia, breathlessness or low oxygen levels) can identify those at greater risk of death, which can be mitigated through appropriate inpatient care, as seen in Shankar's case. The national programme has launched differentiated care guidelines to identify seriously ill patients for referral and in-patient care to reduce the currently unacceptably high rate of TB-related deaths. This will require an adequate number of beds and trained staff, as well as the capacity to manage severe disease and undernutrition. The TNKET initiative in Tamil Nadu has shown that this is feasible.

Families share vulnerabilities and risk factors, of which undernutrition is the most prevalent in India. Families should be considered the unit of TB care and prevention, including screening, diagnosis, and treatment. Prevention of TB in the family rests on administration of TB-preventive treatment and/or provision of nutritional supplementation. TB preventive treatment is now recommended for all household contacts of patients with lung TB. The RATIONS trial in Jharkhand demonstrated a 40-50% reduction in new TB cases among families living with food insecurity, and this has influenced new WHO recommendations on nutritional support for such families. The meningitis in Asif's wife could have been prevented through either TB preventive treatment or nutritional support.

The provision of decentralised comprehensive care, differentiated care, and family-centred care could be transformative in India's mission to reduce new TB cases, improve outcomes and prevent TB deaths.

(Anurag is a professor in the Department of Medicine, Kasturba Medical College, Mangaluru, and Madhavi is a professor in the Department of Community Medicine, Yenepoya Medical College, Mangaluru)

In India, China and other nations, Novo Nordisk is on the verge of losing patent protection for its blockbuster weight loss drug, opening the door for cheaper competing versions

Ozempic is about to go generic for billions of people

REBECCA ROBBINS, MEAGHAN TOBIN, ESHE NELSON, ALEX TRAVELLI AND PRAGATI K B

A patient's measurements are taken before administering an injection of a weight loss drug at the Dadu Medical Centre in New Delhi. Experts expect patient demand for the drugs to grow manifold once cheaper generics become available. NYT

The blockbuster weight loss drug sold as Ozempic and Wegovy will soon go generic in countries that are home to 40% of the world's population, significantly lowering the price of a costly medicine that had been largely unaffordable to nearly all but the wealthiest people. On Saturday, Novo Nordisk, the company that until now has had a monopoly on selling the drug, will lose patent protection in several of the world's most populous countries. The first generic versions are expected to arrive in India as soon as this weekend. In the coming months, the generics are also expected to become available in China, Canada, Brazil, Turkey and South Africa.

"The availability of these drugs, which have been restricted to high-income countries to very wealthy people, will now be democratised by the generics," said Leena Menghaney, an activist in New Delhi focused on treatment access.

The new markets for generics are enormous. Together, India and China are home to more than 800 million adults who are obese or overweight and more than 360 million adults with diabetes.

The generics are poised to shake up a global market for drugs that have transformed the treatment of obesity. Novo Nordisk and its competitor, Eli Lilly, have generated huge sales around the world, but access has been very limited. Generics promise to significantly increase the number of people taking the drugs, which have also been shown to help prevent heart attacks and strokes.

In the United States and Europe, the drug is not expected to go generic until the early 2030s. That delay is due to special regulatory protections that are intended to encourage innovation by extending a brand-name drugmaker's monopoly.

Dozens of generic manufacturers have been racing to produce supplies and win regulatory approvals in countries where they can soon compete. Huge demand is expected from patients who could not afford Novo Nordisk's offering but can budget for cheaper generics. Novo Nordisk sells the drug, semaglutide, as Ozempic for diabetes and as Wegovy for obesity.

"I don't think there has ever been so much excitement for any class of drug going off patent," said Siddharth Mittal, CEO of Biocon, a manufacturer in India that hopes to introduce generics next year in Brazil, Canada and Turkey.

Generic makers have not yet disclosed pricing plans. Analysts predicted that as more competitors enter the market, prices for the generics could eventually drop to about $15 a month. By comparison, higher doses of Wegovy can be bought in the United States without insurance for $349 a month. (The drug is generally available at five dose levels. Higher doses are more expensive. Patients typically start at a low dose and move up to higher doses over a matter of months.)

The drugs are not a cure-all. Some patients stop taking them because of side effects, like nausea, vomiting and constipation, but adverse reactions that have been reported are rarely severe.

Public health advocates hope that if competition from generics drives down prices enough, national health insurance systems might agree to cover the drug for their citizens. Some public health systems, mostly in rich countries, pay for its use to treat diabetes, and all reject coverage for most people taking it to lose weight, because of the cost.

Argent Wang, 31, who lives in the northeastern Chinese city of Dalian, said she spends about $160 a month for the drug. She stopped working to manage complications from diabetes and lives at home with her mother, who also has diabetes. Wang's doctor suggested that she switch to a different dose, but at $291 a month, she cannot afford it.

If a Chinese company offered a generic that was just as effective and cost under $75 a month, Wang might try it. "My expenses are so large, I will consider the path that saves money," she said.

The expiration of the patents presents more trouble for Novo Nordisk, whose stock has plummeted as global competition has eroded its market share. At its peak in mid-2024, the Danish drugmaker was the most valuable public company in Europe.

Eli Lilly, an American company that sells its weight loss drug as Mounjaro for diabetes and as Zepbound for obesity, poses the biggest competitive threat. Eli Lilly is expected to retain patent protection for another decade in most major markets.

Last year, the United States accounted for two-thirds of Novo Nordisk's global sales of Ozempic and Wegovy. But the company has lost US market share to cheap copycat versions of the drug produced through a process known as compounding. These are not generics; they fall into a legal grey area, and US regulators recently vowed to restrict their sales. Seeking to preserve its monopoly, Novo Nordisk has fought in courts in India, China and Brazil to try to block the generics. The company has also cut prices in China and India in anticipation of competition. Officials at Novo Nordisk said the company had developed several strategies to keep reaching patients in countries where it will soon face generics. It might sometimes try to position the original version as a premium brand, they said.

Once the generics arrive in Canada, where Novo Nordisk's patent protection expired in January, some US patients might seek to import the drug from Canadian pharmacies.

Generic makers could also bring semaglutide to poorer countries where Novo Nordisk never sought patent protection and where there has been very little use of the drug so far. Researchers estimated that the generics could be mass-produced for as little as $3 a month per patient.

In India, Novo Nordisk sells higher doses of Wegovy for about $180 a month, a price that is out of reach for most patients.

"Many of my patients would benefit from them, but haven't been using them because of their cost," said Reema Arora, a dermatologist and cosmetologist in New Delhi.

Alkem Laboratories of Mumbai, one of several manufacturers that has won regulatory approval to market a generic in India, has been producing supplies and preparing to distribute them. "We will try and make sure as quickly as possible that we can make our product accessible to doctors and patients," said Vikas Gupta, the company's CEO.

On Instagram and WhatsApp, Indian patients have been eagerly discussing the arrival of the generics, said Himani Raj, who lives in Ahmedabad, in western India. She takes Eli Lilly's drug and runs one of the discussions.

In New Delhi, Nivedita Dadu, a dermatologist, said she expects patient demand for the drugs to grow once cheaper generics become available. Already, she and her sister, an anaesthesiologist, have been prescribing the brand-name drugs to hundreds of patients.

India, like many countries, does not permit the kind of prescription drug ads aimed at consumers that are omnipresent in the US. But with generics looming, Novo Nordisk this month paid for a front-page ad promoting obesity awareness in major newspapers. Eli Lilly has been running ads featuring Bollywood actors. Apparently in response, Indian regulators last week warned the makers of weight loss medicines about the rules against drug advertising.

By early March, 10 generic competitors were in the final stage of being evaluated by Chinese regulators to sell their semaglutide products, and at least a dozen more firms had completed clinical trials.

The United Laboratories, which has its headquarters in the southeastern province of Guangdong and in Hong Kong, expects approval to sell its generic for diabetes before July, said Cao Chunlai, an executive at the company's research and development subsidiary.

China's national health insurance system covers Novo Nordisk's drug for diabetes, while people taking it for obesity must pay out of pocket.

The New York Times

Staples to spectacle: The urban makeover of survival foods

NEELATPHAL CHANDA AND SANTOSH KUMAR

On a sweltering summer morning, in many households across eastern India, a bowl of cold, water-soaked rice, popularly known as *panta bhat*, would be served with a slice of fried red chilli and a few crispy red lentil fritters. Often accompanied by the reassurance that it "strengthens the body and aids digestion," the dish has long been part of everyday nutritional wisdom. Years later, the same preparation appears in food vlogs, described as a 'rural delicacy for an adventurous palate', garnished with microgreens and avocado. What was once eaten out of necessity now returns as curated curiosity. This shift tells a story of cultural transformation, in which a meal once marked by deprivation acquires value for an urban gaze.

This transformation is not abstract; it is already visible in contemporary urban cultural spaces. Visitors to the recently concluded city festival, BLR Hubba 2026, witnessed *hamaar litti*, along with *ghughani gully*, which was one of the attractions at the Thindi Hubba. BLR Hubba, especially through spaces like Thindi Hubba, is the institutional recognition of everyday cultural practices. Additionally, there are *khichadi* parlours in Bengaluru, such as The Great Indian Khichadi, Khichadi Bar, Khichadi House, and The Ghee Khichadi Project, signalling how these foods are travelling from kitchens marked by scarcity to curated urban plates, carrying with them fragments of memory, labour, and survival.

Historically, *panta bhat* has been associated with existential recurrence, poverty, and the "lower" socioeconomic rungs. Drawing on Satyajit Ray's classic cult film, *Pather Panchali*, and Nandalal Bose's illustration in *Sahaj Path*, there were enough references that resonated deeply with *panta bhat*. Particularly, millennials like us, who grew up in a joint family, often heard wisdomary tales from grandparents about this dish being a staple at breakfast and lunch. A close cousin is *congee* or *kanji*, derived from the Tamil word *kañci*, which is considered a wartime or famine recipe because it is made by boiling rice with a large amount of water. It is usually served with pickles. Similarly, *maad bhat* (hot rice water), which is rich in nutrients, used to be a lifesaver for a mother in the state of Bihar.

Khichadi's story is not very different. It is served as a crisis menu for the masses. We witnessed *khichdi* being prepared for displaced people due to floods or other disasters. *Khichadi* is also synonymous with the prison menu. However, it is a lifesaver for students preparing for competitive examinations who are away from home and cooking in their own kitchens. *Litti Chokha* has an ambiguous story. It is a kind of delicacy in the metro; it is easily available in Bihar and eastern UP. It is a safe option for workers in small towns and tehsils.

Though the vloggers are trying to make these subaltern food practices viral, they are doing so at the cost of erasure. Some celebrated chefs are giving it a makeover with shallow-fried mackerel and an assortment of salad and serving it to the elites with cottagecore aesthetics. This has created hype around these staple dishes, raising critical questions like: can the Internet-frenzied populace who Instagrams these dishes as savoury understand the original ethos of these food practices?

The original ethos of these food practices is sustenance rather than spectacle. The spectacle also comes with a cost of sustainability. These foods are evidence of century-old local sustainable practices. *Panta bhat* is made with leftover rice for fermentation, which reduces food waste. Fermentation adds to what is better known as probiotic food. *Khichdi* is cooked not for conspiracy but to save time and fuel. The original *litti* was roasted on a *goitha* or *upla* (traditional fuel cake or charcoal). The roasted *littis* often last two-three days without spoiling. Migrants from Bihar and UP often carry homemade *litti* with pickles during their long journey, as they are healthy and economical. However, the modern or fusion preparation, which often includes adding counter ingredients such as deep-fried mackerel or extra ghee, often spoils the original texture. The aesthetics of low-capital food become the fetish of the rich. This fetish presents these foods as exotic. Though one can easily prepare these foods at home, they are priced exorbitantly in niche restaurants. What we are witnessing, perhaps, is not merely a culinary shift but a deeper cultural reconfiguration.

(The writers are faculty at Christ [Deemed to be University], Bengaluru)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: MARCH 1976

India has to shape its own style of democracy: PM

New Delhi, March 23
Prime Minister Indira Gandhi today sharply rebuked foreign elements "shedding tears for Indian democracy" by bluntly telling them that democracy was nobody's monopoly and that Indian democracy was not under any foreign licence. In a hard-hitting speech at a seminar here, she said that India had chosen democracy not to please any country but because of the belief that democracy would enable it to stay united and make progress in the modern world.

25 YEARS AGO: MARCH 2001

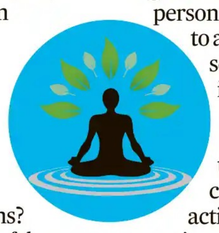
Nethravathy water to be used for drought-prone areas

Bangalore, Mar 23
Chief Minister S M Krishna today said the State Government would make an allocation of Rs 5 crore in the ensuing Budget for conducting technical study on the project to increase the groundwater level in 62 drought-affected taluks in 10 districts by diverting the course of Netravathy river. Mr Krishna was speaking after receiving the preliminary feasibility report for diversion of Netravathy river water for drinking water and ground water recharge for 62 drought-affected taluks.

OASIS | NANDKISHORE

Assumption vs belief: The key to spiritual freedom

When seekers attempt to describe their spiritual state of being, they often use the words assumption and belief as if they were interchangeable. In ordinary conversation this may pass unnoticed, but in matters of spiritual understanding the difference between the two is profound. Confusing them can lead to misunderstanding, because the purpose of describing any spiritual experience is either to offer clarity or to seek it. Those who have understood the deeper meaning of these words have a responsibility to clarify their distinction. When a person assumes something consciously, he accepts responsibility for it. Belief, however, often shifts responsibility away from the individual toward an external authority. In this sense, assumption opens the path to freedom and inner independence, while belief can easily harden into rigidity, making one defensive, adamant, or even arrogant. Consider a simple example. When you voluntarily choose to serve another person, what actually happens through your words, mind, and actions? You first recognise the need of the other. Then you attempt to fulfil that need through appropriate means and thoughtful action. This process is alive and relational. It arises because you have assumed responsibility by your own choice. No external authority compels you to act in this way. Your service is guided by awareness of the living person before you, not by obedience to a fixed instruction. In this sense, assumption is dynamic, it remains open to dialogue, understanding, and change.



Now imagine performing the same act because a book commands you to do so; the action may still appear similar, yet its spirit changes. The process becomes governed by rules and procedures. The person you serve may gradually become secondary, while the instruction itself becomes primary. The living individual turns into a means for fulfilling the command. But a book is not a conscious being. Only living beings possess needs and the capacity for discernment. When belief replaces responsibility, trust in the wisdom of human interaction diminishes.

As conscious beings, we should prioritise living relationships rather than blindly following words written long ago under circumstances very different from our own. If human beings shifted from mere belief to conscious assumption of responsibility, many conflicts might never arise. Imagine that each of us assumed responsibility for peace. Who then could persuade us to wage war?

WEST ASIA CRISIS: 20 Indian-flagged vessels still stranded in the Gulf; seafarers safe, supplies intact

2 Indian LPG tankers sail through Strait of Hormuz

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Central government on Monday said two more Indian-flagged LPG tankers had safely navigated through the war-hit Strait of Hormuz and were expected to reach Indian shores over the next two days.

LPG tankers Pine Gas and Jag Vasant, sailing close to each other, started from the Persian Gulf on Monday morning before crossing the strait. They are carrying about 92,000 tonnes of LPG, Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways Special Secretary Rajesh Kumar Sinha told reporters here.

The vessels have a total of 60 seafarers onboard, and all are said to be safe. Jag Vasant is likely to reach Indian shores on March 26 and Pine Gas on March 28, said an official.

The tankers sailed through waters between Iran's Larak and Qeshm islands, possibly to make their identity clear to Iranian authorities before crossing the strait, ship-tracking data showed.

The two ships were among the 22 Indian-flagged vessels stranded in the Persian Gulf after the West Asia conflict nearly closed the Strait of Hormuz — the narrow waterway between Iran and Oman that connects the oil and gas-producing Gulf countries to the rest of the world.

WAR SHOCKS

Previously, MT Shivalik and MT Nanda Devi, carrying about 92,712 tonnes of LPG — roughly a day's cooking gas consumption of the country — had safely reached Indian shores.

A man sits on an LPG cylinder as he waits outside a gas agency amid disruptions in LPG supplies, in Kanpur, on Monday. PTI

"Ultimately, we want to secure safe passage of all our vessels that are stranded in the region," said Sinha.

"Till safe passage happens, the well-being and safety of our seafarers is our prime focus."

There were no issues with food or drinking-water availability for the crew onboard the Indian vessels as well as Indian sailors on other vessels, he added.

Overall, close to 500 tanker vessels remain confined within the Persian (Arabian) Gulf. These include 108 crude-oil tankers, 166 oil-product tankers, 104 chemical/product tankers, 52 chemical tankers, and 53 other types of tanker.

It was said that Iran might allow select vessels to transit the strait after the verification process, whereby Iran confirms the ownership, cargo, and vessel.

Earlier, Iran said it would not allow enemy countries' ships to pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

ON THEIR WAY

- LPG tankers Pine Gas and Jag Vasant, sailing close to each other, started from the Persian Gulf on Monday morning before crossing Strait of Hormuz
- With a total of 60 seafarers onboard, they are carrying about 92,000 tonnes of LPG
- Jag Vasant to reach Indian shores on March 26; Pine Gas on March 28

'3.5L new PNG connections this month'

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Amid the LPG supply crunch due to the West Asian conflict, the Central government on Monday said more than 3.5 lakh domestic and commercial piped natural gas (PNG) connections have ben issued this month alone.

Insisting that domestic LPG accounted for 50-60% of the current demand, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Joint Secretary Sujata Sharma said the government was picking up LPG cargo from "wherever available".

All refineries were operating at high capacity with adequate crude inventories, and sufficient stocks of petrol and diesel were being maintained, she told reporters here.

Domestic LPG production from refineries had increased compared to pre-crisis levels, she said, adding that no cases of fuel dry-outs had been reported at retail outlets by Oil Marketing Companies, and supplies of petrol and diesel were being maintained.

Fuel facts

Sufficient stocks of petrol and diesel were being maintained, she tells reporters

All refineries operating at high capacity with adequate crude inventories, says Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Joint Secretary Sujata Sharma

Domestic LPG production from refineries had increased compared to pre-crisis levels, she says

Refutes reports that govt is considering reducing LPG refill quantities for households to around 10 kg in standard 14.2-kg cylinders

No case of fuel dry-outs had been reported at retail outlets by OMCs, says jt secy

She also dismissed reports that the government was considering reducing LPG refill quantities for households to around 10 kg in standard 14.2-kg cylinders. "This is highly speculative; don't heed such rumours," she said.

Highlighting distribution measures, Sharma said commercial LPG allocation had been undertaken across 20 states and Union Territories, with 15,800 tonnes already supplied. She also issued a public appeal, urging consumers to "try to conserve LPG and LNG".

Separately, Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Suresh Gopi informed the Rajya Sabha that India's strategic oil reserves, designed to provide cover for about 9.5 days of supplies during disruptions or price shocks, are currently sitting at only two-thirds capacity.

Syringes to catheters, medical device industry feels the heat

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

With the ongoing West Asia conflict adversely impacting India's medical device industry, domestic manufacturers on Monday sought the Union government's help to tide over the crisis, while assuring that there is "no cause for concern yet" regarding the supply of high-volume items such as syringes, catheters and disposables.

The Strait of Hormuz blockade and escalating West Asia tensions have driven up medical device input costs by nearly 50% for critical plastics and over 20% for packaging, the Association of Indian Medical Device Industry (AIMED) said in a statement. Rising PNG prices have added to the worries.

The AIMED reached out to Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, seeking relief such as rationalisation of inland haulage charges by the Container Corporation of India and expedited GST refunds as assured.

India's medical devices industry depends on imports for specialised, high-grade polymers that meet stringent quality and regulatory standards.

The maximum quantities of medical-grade plastics are imported from the European Union, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan. These countries, in turn, depend majorly on West Asia for downstream raw materials, whose productions have reduced due to the crisis.

As a consequence, high-volume but essential items, like syringes, nitrile gloves, catheters and plastic disposable medical devices are impacted.

"As of now, there are no shortages of syringes or other medical disposables. However, we are seeing substantial price increases, longer lead times, and highly elevated freight costs, which are pressuring cost structures and planning cycles," said Rajiv Nath, forum coordinator, AIMED.

"While 1-3 week shipment delays were manageable via buffers, many manufacturers need to revise product prices by 10-20% to sustain operations," he said, noting that the situation warrants close monitoring to safeguard production timelines and industry stability.

Other consequences include the near-doubling of PNG prices used for power generation and process heating, with reduced availability. Supplies of LPG, required by a few examination glove manufacturers as a heat source, have also been disrupted.

Health help

Domestic manufacturers seek Union government's help to tide over crisis

ASSURE THAT THERE IS 'NO CAUSE FOR CONCERN YET' REGARDING SUPPLY OF HIGH-VOLUME ITEMS SUCH AS SYRINGES, CATHETERS, AND DISPOSABLES

West Asia tensions have driven up medical device input costs

PM completely under US control: Rahul

AHMEDABAD, DHNS: Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi on Monday lashed out at Narendra Modi, describing him as a "compromised prime minister completely under the control of the US".

He said, "I heard Narendra Modi gave a 25-minute speech [in Parliament] today. But, I guarantee he can't participate in a debate in Parliament as he is compromised. He did not say even a single word against the US. He is cent-percent under their control."

Rahul Gandhi

The Congress leader was addressing the "Adivasi Adhikar Samvidhan Sammelan" organised by the party in Vadodara as part of its tribal outreach ahead of the upcoming local-body elections.

Rahul claimed, "Adani has formed the entire financial structure of Modi and the BJP... Adani is not an ordinary company... Ports, airports, cement companies have been handed over... Solar power, wind power, infrastructure — everything has been given to this one person. Do you think all this is happening for free? No, it is not happening for free."

He added: "[US President Donald] Trump has Modi under control. How? There are four or five ways, but I will tell you two — Epstein and Adani."

SC to hear plea on Parsi women's identity after interfaith union

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Monday decided to consider a plea questioning whether a Parsi woman can be deprived of her religious identity after entering into an interfaith marriage. A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi agreed to examine the significant constitutional challenge concerning gender discrimination in religious personal laws.

The court issued notice to the authorities concerned on the plea contending that the rule is discriminatory and violates Article 14 (equality before law), Article 21 (right to life and dignity), and Article 25 (freedom of religion) of the Constitution.

The rule allegedly deprived Parsi women of their religious identity and access to religious institutions such as the Agyari (Fire Temple) upon marrying a non-Parsi. Senior advocate Shayam Divan, appearing for the petitioner, challenged the constitutional validity of Rule 5(2) of Nagpur Parsi Panchayat's constitution.

'Remove barriers to India-Russia trade'

NEW DELHI, PTI

India and Russia need to address issues such as non-tariff barriers and regulatory impediments to increase the two-way annual trade to $100 billion by 2030, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Monday while reaffirming New Delhi's steadfast commitment to strengthening the long-standing partnership with Moscow.

"In today's evolving geopolitical dynamics, our engagement continues to deepen," he said in a virtual address at a conference titled "India and Russia: Towards a new bilateral agenda".

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov lauded India's "independent foreign policy" and said that Russia looks forward to welcoming Prime Minister Narendra Modi for a visit this year.

Jaishankar said the evolving multipolar order required greater India-Russia cooperation, including through BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, G20, and the UN.

> "Both sides are committed to increasing the present annual trade from USD 68.7 billion to USD 100 billion by 2030 in a balanced and sustainable manner."
> S JAISHANKAR
> External Affairs Minister

What lies ahead?

India is looking forward to closely working with Russia to address shared challenges in a "balanced and inclusive manner", he said.

"India and Russia share a special and privileged strategic partnership rooted in trust and mutual respect. Over decades, our mutually beneficial cooperation has advanced regional and global peace, stability and progress," Jaishankar said.

The external affairs minister also made a mention of outcomes that emerged from Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to New Delhi in December last year.

"Both sides are committed to increasing the present annual trade from $68.7 billion to $100 billion by 2030 in a balanced and sustainable manner," he said.

AI Boeing 787 plane to London faces tech issue, diverted

NEW DELHI, PTI: Air India's Boeing 787-8 aircraft flying from Bengaluru to London Heathrow was diverted to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia on Monday due to a technical issue after being airborne for over six hours.

In a statement, an airline spokesperson said the plane made a precautionary diversion and was currently undergoing comprehensive technical inspections in accordance with established safety protocols.

"Air India Flight AI133, operating from Bengaluru (BLR) to London Heathrow (LHR) on 23 March, made a precautionary en route diversion to Jeddah following a suspected technical issue. The aircraft landed safely at Jeddah Airport at 1958 hrs IST, and all passengers and crew are confirmed safe [sic]," the spokesperson said.

The number of passengers on board could not be ascertained. The spokesperson also said the airline was coordinating with Jeddah Airport authorities and local agencies to ensure all necessary assistance to passengers and crew.

Rescue operations underway after a cold storage building collapsed in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj on Monday. PTI

4 killed, many feared trapped after blast in UP cold storage

Ammonia tank explosion brings down facility

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

At least four labourers were killed and dozens more are feared trapped under the rubble after a portion of a cold storage facility collapsed, allegedly following a blast in an ammonia gas tank, in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj district on Monday.

The death toll could rise as six labourers were reported to be in critical condition. The deceased were said to be residents of Bihar.

Reports said that the blast occurred around 1 pm, when the labourers were resting after lunch. A section of the cold storage building, located in Chandapur village, collapsed following the explosion, burying several workers under the debris.

Rescue operations were delayed as leaked ammonia gas forced people to stay away from the site. Eyewitnesses said that more than two dozen labourers were inside the building. Some were later rescued by NDRF and SDRF teams.

The cold storage belonged to Samajwadi Party leader Ansar Ahmed. The UP government announced an ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh each to the next of kin of the deceased and Rs 50,000 each to the injured.

32 held across K'taka, T'gana, AP in QNet scam

HYDERABAD, PTI: The Hyderabad police busted a multi-crore illegal money circulation racket allegedly promoted by Vihaan Direct Selling Pvt Ltd Company (QNet), with the arrest of 32 people across Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

Hyderabad Police Commissioner said 30 police teams simultaneously conducted in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, and arrested 32 people.

Most of the accused were IT employees, including some former employees. So far, 11 victims have been examined in four cases and nearly Rs 75 lakh has been lost, the commissioner said.

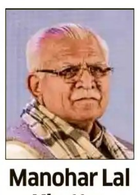
No single woman director in 179 govt-owned cos: Govt data

NEW DELHI, PTI: As many as 179 government-owned companies, including public sector enterprises, do not have a single woman director as required under the companies law, the government said on Monday.

"Out of 708 government-owned companies, including PSEs, which are required to appoint at least one woman director on their boards, 529 companies have appointed at least one woman director and 179 companies have not appointed at least one woman director," Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Harsh Malhotra said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

Centre to provide 10,000 air-conditioned e-buses to 116 cities by 2027

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Monday informed the Rajya Sabha that 10,000 air-conditioned electric buses will be provided to 116 cities across 26 states and Union Territories by the end of 2027 under the PM-eBus Sewa Scheme.



Manohar Lal Khattar

He also announced the launch of a new scheme to supply an additional 35,000 e-buses once the current scheme ends in 2027.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced the PM-eBus Sewa scheme on August 16, 2023, to improve mobility in smaller cities and combat rising pollution. Since states were unable to provide adequate financing for e-buses on their own, the scheme set an initial target of 10,000 buses for towns with populations between 3 lakh and 40 lakh.

Under the scheme, 116 cities across 26 states/UTs have been selected to receive buses under a Public-Private Partnership model. This is subject to the states' participation in the PM-eBus Sewa Payment Security Mechanism, the minister said.

He added that a tranche of 225 buses was delivered last month, tenders have been finalised, and agreements for 6,500 buses have already been signed. More buses will be delivered to states as soon as they finalise their agreements. The distribution of 10,000 buses under the scheme is expected to be completed by the end of 2027.

Once the first 10,000 buses are distributed by 2027 under the PM-eBus Sewa scheme, a second scheme will be launched to supply an additional 35,000 e-buses to states. "We want to extend the benefits of this scheme to more and more cities and support the states, as it also helps reduce pollution," Khattar said.

A Sahaj ticket and a National Common Mobility Card will be introduced, which can be used across these e-buses and other modes of transport. This infrastructure is primarily aimed at helping tier-2 and tier-3 cities, he emphasised.

The modalities of the second scheme are yet to be finalised, and reforms based on the experience of the first scheme will be incorporated into the new one.

Women's quota: Shah meets Oppn, NDA leaders

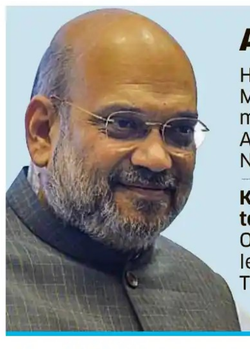
AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

In a bid to build a broad consensus for its move to amend the Women's Reservation Bill and delink it from the upcoming delimitation process, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday met several non-Congress Opposition parties, including AIMIM, NCP and YSRCP. Later in the day, Shah also held discussions with NDA partners.

The bill is expected to be introduced this weekend.

While the government has previously sent feelers to the Congress, as reported by *DH*, a formal meeting is still awaited.

Similar outreach has been made to the Samajwadi Party, though formal talks with the DMK and TMC are yet to take place. Meanwhile, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge is scheduled to meet Opposition leaders on Tuesday to discuss the matter.



Amendment outreach

Home Minister meets AIMIM, NCP, YSRCP

Govt to amend Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam to delink quota from Census 2027

Kharge to meet Opposition leaders Tuesday

Plans to proceed on basis of 2011 census due to delays

According to sources, the government is preparing to introduce two major amendments. This includes an amendment to the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (or the Women's Reservation Act) 2023. As per the Act, women's reservation was linked to the 2027 census and the subsequent delimitation exercise.

"Due to delays in conducting the census, the plan is now to proceed based on the 2011 census data," a senior government manager said. To this end, an amendment bill to the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam is likely to be introduced this week.

The government is also preparing to introduce a separate bill for a consensus on the increase in the number of Lok Sabha seats. The 2011 census will serve as the basis for the delimitation and the redetermination of seats. Following the passage of the amendment bill, the number of Lok Sabha seats could increase from 543 to 816, government sources said.

After Shah's meeting with a handful of Opposition leaders — including Supriya Sule of NCP (Sharad faction), Asaduddin Owaisi of AIMIM and Y Midhun Reddy of YSRCP — a meeting of NDA floor leaders took place with Shah, where leaders, including Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, RLM chief Upendra Kushwaha, RJD's Lallan Singh, Shiv Sena MPs Shrikant Shinde and Milind Deora, AIADMK's M Thambidurai, Apna Dal's Anupriya Patel and NCP's Praful Patel, were present.

'Never demanded bribe from SRK'

MUMBAI, DHNS: Nearly five years after the October 2-3, 2021, midnight raid on the Cordelia cruise from Mumbai to Goa and subsequent investigations in which Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan was arrested, Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer Sameer Wankhede said on Monday that he had never sought or taken bribes from the actor.

SC dismisses Wangchuk's wife's plea on his detention

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Supreme Court on Monday disposed of a plea filed by Gitanjali J Angmo, wife of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, against the latter's detention under the National Security Act (NSA).

A bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and PB Varale noted that the Centre revoked its order of Wangchuk's detention on March 14. The apex court said there was nothing left in the matter.

Earlier, the top court had asked the Centre if there was any possibility for the government to relook at the detention of Wangchuk, considering his health condition.

The Centre on March 14 said it had revoked with immediate effect the detention of Wangchuk under the NSA, nearly six months after he was arrested following violent protests in Leh that left four dead. Wangchuk was detained on September 26, 2025, two days after the protests over demands for statehood for Ladakh and its inclusion under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution rocked Leh.

SC pulls up WB govt over obstructed development project

'Don't create roadblocks for ongoing Kolkata Metro rail project'

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Monday pulled up the West Bengal government for "creating roadblocks" in the ongoing construction of a corridor of a Kolkata Metro rail project, reminding it that a developmental issue beneficial for the masses should not be politicised.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi declined to entertain the West Bengal government's plea against a December 23, 2025, high court order.

Considering the matter, the bench said, "This merely exhibits the obstinate attitude of the authorities, wherein they want to delay and stall the Metro rail project in Kolkata. There was no infirmity in the order passed by the HC; we are sure that the project is completed in a time-bound manner."

The bench told the state's counsel: "This shows complete dereliction of your constitutional duty. You are running away from your responsibilities." The court also said it did not appreciate the state government politicising a developmental issue beneficial to the common man, telling the state government, "Don't create roadblocks."

The court said it was only pointing out that the HC had been very magnanimous to the state government. "This was a fit case where your chief secretary, Director General of Police, and other authorities should have been subjected to some action," said the bench.

The state's counsel contended the state was under the Model Code of Conduct for the upcoming elections, and that board examinations were underway.

The bench said the Election Commission (EC) could not object to this development project, which was ongoing and being monitored by the HC.

"For you, festivals are more important than development. It is not that you are willing; you are duty-bound," the bench said. "You told the HC that you have festivals to take care of. Is a festival more important than the construction of a transport artery?"

The bench made it clear that it did not appreciate a democratically-elected government knocking on the apex court's door and asking for this to be ignored. "The EC will not have a difficulty in allowing the project. This was launched before the commencement of the MCC. We will not allow the state to use this as a bogey to stall development again," it said.

Court raps Gurugram police over child sex assault case

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Monday came down heavily upon the Gurugram Police for displaying "insensitivity" in handling the alleged sexual assault of a four-year-old girl at a city condominium.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi directed Gurugram's commissioner of police to appear before it on March 25. The incident reportedly involved two domestic help and their male accomplices.

Advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for the parents, said the magistrate stated the child would not understand the oath and asked her to speak the truth while the accused stood in the room. Rohatgi said the law requires a screen, contending, "The accused can't be in confrontation with the child." He argued that the woman investigating officer asked the parents to withdraw the FIR, and was suspended for taking a bribe in another case registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

Non-joining of a selected candidate gives no right to next candidate: SC

Top court sets aside K'taka HC order on recruitment claim

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Monday held that the government's decision to fill notified vacancies cannot be equated with the creation of a right for every candidate ranked below the selected candidate to claim automatic substitution in the event of non-joining.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta set aside the Karnataka High Court's April 21, 2025 judgment, which had allowed a writ petition filed by Santhosh Kumar C.

The respondent had been selected for the post of Assistant Commissioner of Commercial Taxes, Group A, in the 2011 recruitment conducted by the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC). However, he sought appointment to the post of Assistant Commissioner, Karnataka Administrative Service, Group A, Junior Scale, after one candidate, Aiyappa MA, failed to undergo the mandatory medical examination and police verification and did not report for duty.

Considering the challenge to the HC's judgment by the Karnataka government and the KPSC, the bench said, "In the absence of such a provision, the mere fact that a selected candidate did not join cannot, by itself, create an enforceable right in favour of the respondent."

The court noted that the Karnataka Recruitment of Gazetted Probationers (Appointment by Competitive Examinations) Rules, 1997, do not indicate that the list is to continue as an open-ended source of appointment even after the notified vacancies have been exhausted or the selection process has otherwise run its course.

The court also pointed out that the first proviso to Rule 11(3) makes it clear that inclusion in the list does not by itself result in appointment.

Court convicts 9 TN cops over custodial death of father-son duo

CHENNAI, DHNS: A local court on Monday convicted nine police personnel for the custodial killing of P Jeyaraj and his son Emmanuel Bennix at the Sathankulam station in Thoothukudi district in June 2020.

The case had sent shock waves across the country for the brutality inflicted on the father-son duo by policemen over an argument.

Jeyaraj and Bennix were arrested by the Sathankulam police on June 19, 2020. While the son took his last breath on June 22, the father died the next day due to a merciless beating by scores of policemen who took turns.

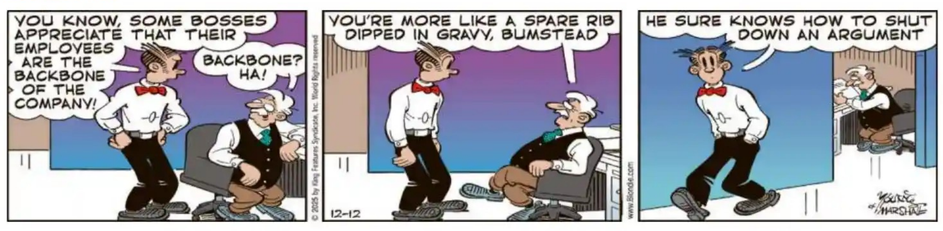
The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court took suo motu cognisance of the case and is monitoring the probe.

Judge G Muthukumaran of the First Additional District and Sessions Court in Madurai found Inspector S Sridhar, sub-inspectors P Raghu Ganesh and K Balakrishnan; head constables S Murugan and A Saamidurai; and constables M Muthuraj, S Chelladurai, Thomas X and S Veil Muthu, guilty of murder.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie


YOU KNOW, SOME BOSSES APPRECIATE THAT THEIR EMPLOYEES ARE THE BACKBONE OF THE COMPANY!
BACKBONE? HA!
YOU'RE MORE LIKE A SPARE RIB DIPPED IN GRAVY, BUMSTEAD
HE SURE KNOWS HOW TO SHUT DOWN AN ARGUMENT
12-12

Hagar The Horrible

POOR HAMLET! THAT BACKPACK IS SO HEAVY WITH BOOKS!
WHEN WE WERE KIDS, WE DIDN'T HAVE SCHOOL-BOOKS!
I HAD TO BE BORED WITH OTHER THINGS!

Beetle Bailey

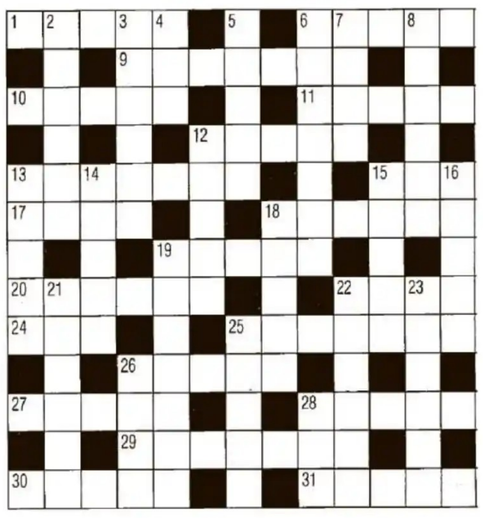
Peanuts

WHAT AM I GOING TO DO, CHARLIE BROWN? I CAN'T GET MY BLANKET AWAY FROM THAT CAT!
WHY DON'T YOU SURPRISE HIM? DROP DOWN ON HIM FROM A HELICOPTER!
A HELICOPTER?
CHOP CHOP CHOP CHOP

Marvin

I'M WRITING A DAILY JOURNAL ABOUT MY EXCITING LIFE
...IN CASE A PRODUCER SOMEDAY WANTS TO TURN IT INTO A MOVIE
WHEN HE MEETS ME, HE'LL INSIST I BE THE STAR!

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12379



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
1 It's about wrecking a vessel (1-4)
6 Wood offering scope for carving (5)
9 So it's up to a convict to make a dash (7)
10 Mickey has nothing to think about (5)
11 Statesmanlike input, possibly? (5)
12 There's little room on an island for him (5)
13 Served up more or less hot (7)
15 Favourite part of the Indian rope trick (3)
17 It's not cold in the attic (4)
18 Poison to remedy out of warmheartedness? (6)
19 Hot music lacking breadth (5)
20 When Dai was bent on taking cook out for the day (6)
22 Pair having a wild kiss (4)
24 A craze that may seem no end daft (3)
25 It may have a shocking potential (7)
26 They know how to stir up some demand (5)
27 No mime show (5)
28 He has to do something dramatic (5)
29 One area in which the Aussies aren't in front (7)
30 Bounded the meadow at one point (5)
31 Impressive characters? (5)

DOWN
2 Irish type of shoe? (6)
3 Declare Tessa's upset about Romeo (6)
4 A big one to note? (3)
5 It has its limitations on the road (5)
6 Generous policeman promises to pay (7)
7 Burden on the States (4)
8 Silk producer with a website (6)
12 Be a rotter? (5)
13 Banter easily wafted away (5)
14 Sort of fire quick to gain ground? (5)
15 You could wear one in a park (5)
16 Steer the short way (5)
18 Sing an opportune rhyme (5)
19 As distributed to the worker on strike? (4-3)
21 A devastating thing to do (6)
22 Solid enough to keep to the very end (6)
23 Pass over a ravaged region (6)
25 To have and to hold? (5)
26 In a superior position to mash some potatoes (4)
28 Legislation with no devilish impact? (3)

ACROSS
1 Rabbit's cage (5)
6 On the ocean (2,3)
9 Repulsive (7)
10 Sag (5)
11 Opposite of heads (5)
12 Previous (5)
13 Inanely foolish (7)
15 Ventilate (3)
17 Unfortunately (4)
18 Convince, guarantee (6)
19 Number (5)
20 Hand tool (6)
22 Flank (4)
24 Still (3)
25 Stroll (7)
26 Backless shoes (5)
27 Regal (5)
28 Small fish (5)
29 Garment (4,3)
30 Scornful expression (5)
31 Sorts, kinds (5)

DOWN
2 Imaginary, illusory (6)
3 Group of singers (6)
4 Pelvis (3)
5 Dreads (5)
6 Postmortem examination (7)
7 A tyrant (4)
8 Chocolate finger cake (6)
12 Student (5)
13 Ornamented, decorative (5)
14 Unspoken (5)
15 Inspection of accounts (5)
16 Allude (5)
18 Book of maps (5)
19 Temporal (7)
21 Diamorphine (6)
22 Smart, fashionable (6)
23 Ten years (6)
25 Searches (5)
26 Pal (4)
28 Chronic drunkard (3)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12378

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 3, G-r-uff 8, Rowan 10, Larry 11, Gas 12, Sabot(age) 13, Was-t-R-el 15, Water 18, Oar 19, Re-late 21, Officer 22, Ruff 23, Tyne 24, Sumatra 26, Statu(E)s 29, Lie 31, Sol-I-d 32, Senator 34, Adi-O-s 35, Sub 36, Lit-re 37, Com-ic 38, Andes.
DOWN: 1, Logan 2, Cast off 4, Real 5, Flower 6, Fatal 7, Greet 9, Was (saw) 12, Serio-us 14, RAF 16, T-any-a 17, Reve-L 19, Regal-es 20, Cross 21, Off-al 23, Treason 24, S-udd-EN 25, Tin 27, Toni-c 28, Ti-a-RA 30, Rob-I-n 32, Sole 33, Tum.
EASY
ACROSS: 3, Flood 8, Fatal 10, Realm 11, Mad 12, Latin 13, Hexagon 15, Gives 18, Vet 19, Rimini 21, Mention 22, Liar 23, Pill 24, Arsenal 26, Dressy 29, Tin 31, Earls 32, At large 34, Ounce 35, Cur 36, Venom 37, Beget 38, Peter.
DOWN: 1, Camel 2, Cadaver 4, Loan 5, Origin 6, Denim 7, Alien 9, Tax 12, Lottery 14, Gen 16, Vigil 17, Sidle 19, Rosette 20, Glade 21, Maker 23, Panacea 24, Assume 25, Nil 27, Races 28, Sloop 30, Agree 32, Ache 33, Rug.

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

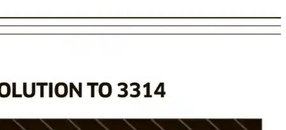
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DEULE

TNNHI

PRUATB

SDYMIA


You were saying that people without brains do an awful lot of talking.
Was I? I forget where I was going with that.
9/11
THE SCARECROW DIDN'T HAVE A BRAIN, AND AS A RESULT, HE WAS BEING ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

©2025 Tribune Content Agency, LLC
All Rights Reserved.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PEPPY TOXIC JOGGER EXOTIC
Answer: Building an elaborate doghouse in the backyard was his — PET PROJECT

◆SU-DO-KU-6861◆

	8		3	1			4	
	4					8		
3		2	4		6			9
			1	2	4			
8								7
			8	5	7			
1			7		5	9		4
		7					6	
	2			4	1		8	

hard

6	3	5	1	8	7	9	4	2
2	8	9	3	5	4	1	7	6
1	4	7	2	9	6	5	8	3
8	5	3	6	7	9	2	1	4
9	2	1	4	3	8	7	6	5
4	7	6	5	2	1	3	9	8
3	1	8	7	6	5	4	2	9
5	9	4	8	1	2	6	3	7
7	6	2	9	4	3	8	5	1

SOLUTION TO 6860

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

©2025 Mattel, SCRABBLE™ and SCRABBLE tiles, including S1 tiles, are trademarks of Mattel.

							2nd Letter Triple	RACK 1
Y4	S1	T1	L1	O1	A1	X8		
							Triple Word Score	RACK 2
U1	I1	B3	E1	S1	S1	T1		
							Triple Word Score	RACK 3
P3	N1	L1	I1	D2	O1	H4		
								RACK 4
R1	A1	E1	E1	L1	O1	F4		

PAR SCORE 170-180
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

B3	U1	M3	P3				
T1	I1	E1	B3	A1	C3	K5	
C3	O1	N1	T1	E1	M3	N1	
C3	L1	U1	N1	K5	S1		

RACK 1 = 30
RACK 2 = 95
RACK 3 = 83
RACK 4 = 36
JUDD'S TOTAL 244

PAR SCORE 160-170

HITORI-3315

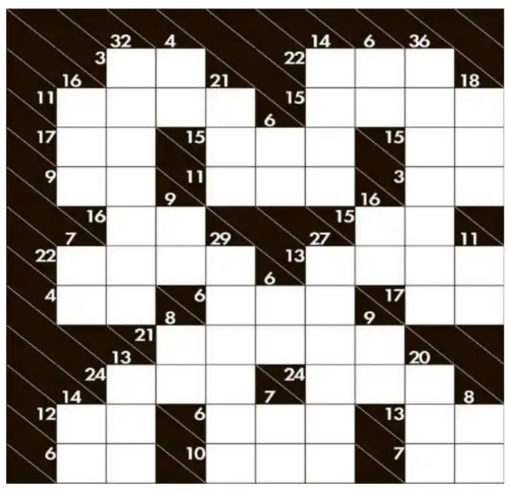
6	7	5	3	3	4	6	3
6	8	8	3	1	5	3	2
5	7	4	1	4	6	3	8
7	3	3	6	4	3	8	8
3	4	1	3	5	8	3	3
1	5	3	4	3	2	5	7
3	1	7	3	6	4	2	5
8	3	6	5	7	3	4	4

SOLUTION TO 3314

1	4	■	3	6	■	8	■
■	2	1	8	5	4	7	3
8	5	2	4	■	7	■	6
3	■	4	■	8	5	2	■
■	6	7	5	■	8	■	1
5	7	3	■	4	2	6	8
■	8	■	2	1	6	5	■
6	3	8	■	2	■	1	5

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3315



SOLUTION TO 3314

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3864

■	3	4	2			7		■
	■			4			■	
1		■			7	■	9	
			■	9	■			7
				■	1		3	2
9			■	8	■			
		■				5		
	■		1				■	
■	8			7	4			■

SOLUTION TO 3863

8	1	5	2	9	3	4	7	6
4	3	7	1	6	8	5	9	2
9	2	6	4	5	7	8	3	1
7	6	2	9	8	4	1	5	3
5	8	9	3	1	6	2	4	7
3	4	1	7	2	5	6	8	9
6	9	3	8	4	2	7	1	5
1	5	4	6	7	9	3	2	8
2	7	8	5	3	1	9	6	4

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

Israeli minister calls to annex south Lebanon

Netanyahu's office silent on Finance Minister's remarks

JERUSALEM/BEIRUT, REUTERS

Israel should extend its border with Lebanon up to the Litani River deep inside the country's south, Israel's finance minister said on Monday as Israeli troops bombed bridges and destroyed homes in the area in an escalating military assault.

The comments by Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich were the most explicit yet by a senior Israeli official on seizing Lebanese territory in a fight Israel says targets Iran-backed Hezbollah militants.

Lebanon was pulled into the regional war on March 2 when Hezbollah fired missiles into Israel. Since then, Israel has ordered all residents to leave the area south of the Litani River as it pummels the area with air strikes, viewing it as a Hezbollah stronghold.

Lebanese authorities say the Israeli air and ground assault has killed more than 1,000 people, and more than a million have been driven from their homes with Israel having ordered residents to flee swathes of the country.

The Litani

Smotrich told an Israeli radio program that the military campaign in Lebanon "needs to end with a different reality entirely, both with the Hezbollah decision but also with the change of Israel's borders."

"I say here definitively...in every room and in every discussion, too: the new Israeli border must be the Litani," Smotrich said.

Smotrich, leader of a small far-right party in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet, often makes comments that go beyond official Israeli policy.

Netanyahu's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the remarks. Defence Minister Israel Katz hinted earlier this month at plans to capture land, saying Lebanon could face "loss of territory" if it did not disarm Hezbollah.

Smotrich's remarks were deeply resonant in Lebanon, which is trying to emerge from a decades-old cycle of invasions and occupations by its neighbour. Israeli forces have launched repeated assaults on Lebanon since 1978 and occupied the south from 1982-2000.

A Lebanese official told Reuters that Beirut was still counting on foreign powers to put enough pressure on Israel to put an end to the war, through an offer from President Joseph Aoun to hold direct talks.

UK sending air defence systems to Gulf

Britain is sending short-range air defence systems to the Gulf to help counter Iranian missile attacks, Prime Minister Keir Starmer said Monday, reports AFP. "We're deploying short range air defence systems to Bahrain at speed," Starmer told a parliamentary committee, adding the UK was "doing the same with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia".

Colombian military plane with 125 on board crashes after takeoff

Mishap resulted in undetermined number of casualties; 48 rescued

BOGOTA, AP

A military transport plane with 125 people on board crashed shortly after taking off Monday in southwestern Colombia, causing an undetermined number of casualties, officials in the South American country said. At least 48 people were rescued alive.

Defence Minister Pedro Sánchez said on X that the plane was carrying troops when the "tragic accident" occurred in Puerto Leguizamo, a remote municipality in the Amazonian province of Putumayo, which borders Peru and Ecuador.

Images shared online by Colombian media outlets showed a black cloud of smoke rising from a field where the plane crashed, and a truck with soldiers rushing to the site.

Soldiers and rescuers near an Air Force Hercules emitting thick smoke after the aircraft crashed during takeoff in Puerto Leguizamo, Colombia, on Monday. AFP

Carlos Fernando Silva, the commander of Colombia's Air Force, later issued a video saying that 125 people were on board the Hercules C-130 plane, including 114 passengers and 11 crew members. Silva said that at least 48 people were rescued alive as rescue efforts continued at the crash site.

Media outlets shared videos of soldiers being rushed from the site on motorcycles driven by local residents.

"At this moment we do not know details" of the crash Silva said. "Except that the plane had a problem and went down about two kilometers from the airport." The air force commander added that two planes, with 74 beds, had been sent to the area to fly the injured back to hospitals in Bogota and elsewhere. Colombian President Gustavo Petro wrote on X that he hoped there would be "no deadly casualties in this accident that should have not occurred."

Petro seized on the accident to promote what he called his long-time campaign to modernize planes and other equipment used by his country's military.

China limits fuel price hikes as oil costs surge

BEIJING, AFP: China has limited the amount by which the country's fuel costs can rise, the government announced Monday, to mitigate surging oil prices due to the Middle East war.

Global oil prices have soared as the war between the United States, Israel and Iran has centred around the Strait of Hormuz, through which around 20 percent of the world's oil and gas shipments normally transit.

"To mitigate impact of abnormal increases in international oil prices, ease burden on downstream users, and ensure stable economic operations & public welfare, temporary regulatory measures have been adopted," China's state planner said.

US Supreme Court hears mail-in ballot case that could impact midterms

WASHINGTON, AFP

The US Supreme Court was weighing on Monday whether mail-in ballots received by electoral authorities after Election Day can be counted, in a case that could have repercussions for November's midterm elections.

The case involves a challenge by the Republican National Committee (RNC) to a law in the southern state of Mississippi that allows ballots to be counted if they arrive within five business days after Election Day.

The ballots must be postmarked by Election Day.

Fourteen US states allow mail-in ballots to be tallied after the date of the election if they bear a postmark by Election Day.

Republican President Donald Trump has been a vocal critic of mail-in ballots and has falsely claimed that they contributed to his 2020 election loss to Democrat Joe Biden.

The US Supreme Court. REUTERS

A federal judge ruled in favor of Mississippi but was overturned by an appeals court panel which said ballots must arrive by Election Day to be counted.

Mississippi Solicitor General Scott Stewart, arguing before the top court on Monday, said "states have broad power over elections" and have been allowed to count ballots received after Election Day for "over a century."

"Congress has respected it and no one challenged it until now," Stewart said.

Democrats tend to use mail-in ballots more than Republicans and the practice became more widespread during the Covid pandemic.

The Trump administration has joined the opponents of the Mississippi law and a ruling by the conservative-dominated Supreme Court could affect the ballot-counting rules in other states.

The mail-in ballot counting case is one of a number of voting rights cases being heard by the Supreme Court this term.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

US President Donald Trump speaks as he visits Graceland, the estate of Elvis Presley, in Memphis, Tennessee on Monday. AFP

First UN high seas summit proposed for Jan in New York

Countries that ratified a landmark treaty to protect the high seas on Monday set January 2027 as the proposed date for their first summit, known as a conference of the parties, reports AFP from United Nations.

After years of delays, the treaty was ratified in September by 60 countries. The law aims to protect biodiverse areas in international waters, beyond countries' exclusive economic zones.

Belizean diplomat Janine Coye-Felson, co-chair of the committee working on implementing the treaty, said the group would recommend "that the first meeting of the COP be convened from 11 to 22nd January 2027 at UN Headquarters" in New York city.

The preparatory committee is holding its final meeting in New York to lay the groundwork for January's summit, where operating rules and the location of a new secretariat must be decided.

The treaty, adopted in June 2023, aims to counter the myriad threats facing the world's high seas, including climate change, pollution and overfishing. Teeming with life, the oceans are responsible for creating half of the globe's oxygen supply and are vital to combatting global warming because they absorb significant amounts of the CO2 emitted by human activities, conservationists say.

Russia, Vietnam seal nuke deal

Russia and Vietnam signed an inter-governmental agreement on cooperation in construction of the Ninh Thuan 1 nuclear power plant in Vietnam, Russia's state nuclear energy corporation Rosatom said on Monday, reports Reuters from Moscow.

Vietnam needs to secure more electric power as it has faced major power blackouts because demand from its huge industrial sector and expanding middle class often outpaces supplies, strained by more frequent extreme weather, including droughts and typhoons.

The project is part of Vietnam's strategy to boost power generation capacity. Communist-ruled Vietnam has traditionally maintained close ties with Russia.

Rosatom, the world's leading nuclear power plant builder, said the agreement outlines the terms and main areas of cooperation between the parties in implementing the construction project. No detail on cost was specified.

SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
Follow us on X @SCRailwayindia
Details of the Tender Notices of S.C Railway can be seen on our website : www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
PUB/217/26

CE/C-I/SC & CE/C-II/SC Construction Organisation, S.C.Railway, Secunderabad, respectively, invites e-tender on behalf of the President of India for the following works:

S. No.: 1, **NIT No.:** EPC-06-CAO-C-SC -2026 Date: 10/03/2026, **Name of work:** South Central Railway (Construction Organization)-Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Contract for (A) Construction of Important bridge No.:57 of size 53x61.0m (minimum clear span) over river Krishna with standard RDSO Open Web Girder superstructure (for single line) for 25t axle loading with Well foundation (Foundation, SubStructure including Bed Blocks for Two Tracks) including protection works, Track works, over Open Web Girder portion and, (B) Construction of Station building, CPM Camp Office, Platform Works, Approach Track works etc. at Kothapalli halt station and Earth Work in formation for a length of 1033mts on Errupalem end & 534m on Namburu End of Important bridge including construction of Minor and Major Bridges between Amaravati and Paritala stations in connection with Errupalem-Nambur (Via Amaravati) New BG Line in Guntur Division of South Central Railway" of Andhra Pradesh state. **Details: Estimated Cost Rs.:** 565,83,62,681.09 **EMD Rs.:** 20000000.00 **Completion Period:** 33 (Thirty Three) Months. **Date of Opening:** 15/05/2026 15:00hrs.

S. No.: 2, **NIT No.:** PMS-03-CAO-C-SC-2026 Date: 13/03/2026, **Name of work:** SCR Construction Organization -Appointment of Authority Engineer for providing project Management services (PMS) for a period of 60 months for the projects of 1.Quadrupling (Laying of New 3rd & 4th Lines) between Wadi & Secunderabad (Sanathnagar) stations (173Kms) in Secunderabad Division of South Central Railway in the States of Telangana and Karnataka. 2.Laying of 3rd & 4th line between Yadadri and Kazipet stations (77.958 Kms) and 4th line between Ghatkesar and Yadadri Stations (32.448 kms) in Secunderabad Division of South Central Railway in the State of Telangana. **Details: Estimated Cost Rs.:** 88,35,54,800.00 **EMD Rs.:** 45,67,800.00 **Completion Period:** 60 (Sixty) Months **Date of Opening:** 15/04/2026 15:00hrs.

1. For bid document and other details, please login to website **https://ireps.gov.in.**
2. Tenderers can submit their offers online during tender submission period which is the Fifteen days period prior to closing of tender.
3. Tenderers should watch for any corrigenda (issued online only) up to the date of commencement of the tender submission period.

Chief Admn.Officer/Const./ Secunderabad
A2745

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, Please visit website at https://www.ireps.gov.in or www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

4 Jewish ambulances set ablaze in UK

LONDON, AP

Four ambulances belonging to a Jewish charity in London were set on fire early Monday morning in London, in what British police are investigating as a hate crime.

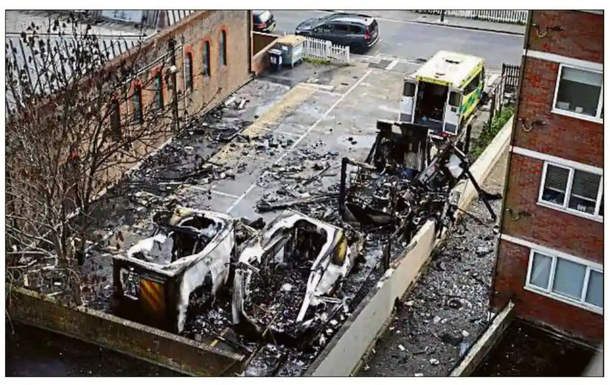
British Prime Minister Keir Starmer condemned the "deeply shocking" antisemitic arson attack.

"My thoughts are with the Jewish community who are waking up this morning to this horrific news," he said.

Officers were called to Golders Green, a London neighbourhood with a large Jewish population, after receiving reports of a fire, the Metropolitan Police force said.

Four ambulances belonging to Hatzola Northwest, a volunteer organisation that provides emergency medical response, were damaged, according to the London fire brigade.

Multiple cylinders on the vehicles exploded, causing windows to break in an adjacent apartment block. The force said no injuries have been reported and the fire has been brought under control.



Burnt out ambulances are pictured in a parking area along a street in the Golders Green neighbourhood of north London on Monday. AFP\

The cause of the fire is being investigated, authorities said.

"We know this incident will cause a great deal of community concern and officers remain on scene to carry out urgent enquiries," Police Superintendent Sarah Jackson said.

She added that the police are looking for three suspects but no arrests have been made yet.

British police said the attack on Jewish community ambulances in north London was not being treated as a terrorist incident but the investigation would be led by counter terrorism officers.

Mark Reisner, an eyewitness who lives in the neighbourhood, heard loud explosions and reached the scene "just as the third ambulance was blowing up," he told Sky News.

"A very loud explosion, you sort of felt it go through your guts," he said, adding, "it's just left us all reeling with confusion and shock."

Shomrim, a nonprofit organisation which operates a neighbourhood watch in the area, condemned the attack. "This was not only a criminal act of arson, but a targeted and deeply concerning incident affecting a vital emergency service serving the local Jewish community," it said in a post on X.

The number of antisemitic incidents reported across the UK has soared since the start of the Israel-Hamas war in late 2023, according to the Community Security Trust, which works to protect the Jewish community.

Pilot, copilot killed as Air Canada flight hits fire truck in NY

NEW YORK, AP: Two pilots were killed after an Air Canada regional jet collided with a fire truck on a runway during landing at New York's LaGuardia Airport late Sunday night, officials said.

The collision crushed the nose of the aircraft, while 39 passengers and crew members were taken to area hospitals, some with serious injuries. Most have since been released from treatment, authorities said Monday.

Two Port Authority employees who were travelling in the fire truck also suffered injuries that were not believed to be life-threatening, said Kathryn Garcia, executive director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which operates the airport.

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, चतरा

ई–निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना।

डी0एम0एफ0टी0 मद से चतरा जिलान्तर्गत योजनाओं के क्रियान्वयन हेतु ग्रामीण विकास विभाग (ग्रामीण कार्य मामले), झारखण्ड सरकार द्वारा समुचित श्रेणी के निबंधित संवेदको से द्वि (Two) लिफाफा पद्धति के अंतर्गत निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। **ई–निविदा सूचना संख्या :– RDD/SD/CHATRA/10/2025-26/RE-1**

1. कार्य की विस्तृत विवरणी :–

ग्रुप० सं०	प्रखण्ड	पंचायत	ग्राम	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि	अग्रधन की राशि	परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि	लिफाफा पद्धति
1	टण्डवा	बचरा उत्तरी	हेमनदाग	Construction of High Level RCC Girder Bridge on Hemandag Nala at-Hemandag Main Road, Bachratand.	28435310.00	568800.00	10000.00	18 माह	द्वि (Two)

2. वेबसाईट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि – **01.04.2026**
3. ई–निविदा प्राप्ति की तिथि एवं समय – दिनांक–**01.04.2026** से दिनांक–**15.04.2026** के अपराह्न 05:00 बजे तक
4. ई–निविदा खोलने का स्थान – कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, चतरा।
5. ई–निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय – **17.04.2026** अपराह्न 02:00 बजे
6. ई–निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता :– कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, चतरा।
7. ई–निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का दूरभाष सं० – 9431060939 (संबंधित कार्यपालक अभियंता का दूरभाष नम्बर)
8. परिमाण विपत्र की राशि घट–बढ़ सकती है, तदनुसार अग्रधन की राशि देय होगी।
9. निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि केवल Online Mode द्वारा स्वीकार्य होगी।
10. निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि का ई–भुगतान जिस खाता से किया जायेगा, उसी खाते में अग्रधन की राशि वापस होगी। अगर खाता को बन्द कर दिया जाता है तो उसकी सारी जवाबदेही आपकी होगी।
विस्तृत जानकारी के लिये वेबसाईट www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in एवं कार्यालय की सूचना पट्ट पर देखा जा सकता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता,
ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, चतरा।

PR.NO.375855 Rural Development(25-26):D

Blow to Italy's Meloni as she suffers referendum defeat

ROME, AFP: Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni conceded defeat on Monday in a referendum on justice reform, but despite the major blow to her far-right leadership, she insisted she was going nowhere.

With almost all ballots counted from the Sunday-Monday vote, the "No" camp was at almost 54 percent, compared to just over 46 percent for "Yes", according to official figures.

During the campaign, Meloni had insisted the referendum, which concerned the role and oversight of judges and prosecutors, was not about her own leadership of the government.

And she repeated this Monday, saying "the Italians have decided", but adding that "this does not change our commitment to continue".

Giorgia Meloni

Yet she had forcefully campaigned for the proposals, alongside her coalition partners in the hard-right government, while the opposition parties had fought for a "No".

Daniele Albertazzi, a professor of politics at the UK's University of Surrey told AFP it was a "bad, bad result" for Meloni.

"It means she has lost the Italian electorate on a major issue in her manifesto, and one of the key proposals of the right... for the past 30 years," he said.

Masked performers offer confetti to a girl during the last day of the city's carnival in the historical centre of Limoux, southern France. AFP

France ex-PM Jospin dies at 88

Lionel Jospin

Former French prime minister Lionel Jospin, a Socialist who introduced the 35-hour work week and civil partnerships for gay couples, has died aged 88, his family said on Monday, reports AFP from Paris.

Jospin -- who was head of government from 1997 to 2002 before being overtaken by the far right in presidential polls -- died on Sunday, they told AFP.

He had said he had a "serious operation" and had returned home to rest in January, without providing details.

To supporters, Jospin was honest and straitlaced. To his critics, he was a colourless technocrat.

He paid a high price for his lack of pizzazz when he ran for president in 2002.

A former economics professor, Jospin cast himself as a clean pair of hands compared to his conservative rival, the corruption-tainted but chummy and charismatic Jacques Chirac.

A firefighting helicopter drops water to extinguish a fire on a wind turbine at a wind power complex in the eastern coastal county of Yeongdeok on Monday. Three people were killed in a fire at a wind turbine in South Korea, days after a blaze at a car parts factory left 14 dead. AFP

Gold drops sharply as macro headwinds eclipse safe-haven demand

Experts say prolonged geopolitical stress could revive demand

HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE
BENGALURU, DHNS

Gold prices in the Indian retail market have plunged 21.6% over the past three weeks, dropping from Rs 1,58,650 per 10 grams on March 1, to Rs 1,24,350 per 10 grams on March 23, even as global markets witnessed one of the sharpest corrections in decades. The yellow metal, which had been on a sustained upward trajectory through 2025 and into early 2026, fell over 5% on Monday to hit a four-month low, after recording its steepest weekly loss in over 40 years.

Globally, gold slipped below $4,300, down about 5.5% (about $250), while MCX prices corrected by around Rs 11,000 to Rs 1,33,700 (about 7.5%). Analysts say the fall, though unusual for a traditional safe-haven asset, reflects a broader macroeconomic shift.

"From a price perspective, the correction has been substantial," said Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst — Commodities at HDFC Securities. "MCX gold has fallen over 20% from its March 2 high, while silver is down nearly 33%. Globally, gold has corrected about 24% and silver 35%, even as US Treasury yields have risen around 12%, signalling a shift toward yield-bearing assets," he told *DH*.

Hareesh V, Head of Commodity Research, Geojit Investments Limited, maintained that gold has not yet entered a bear phase. "Gold has not officially entered a bear market. It has rallied more than 170% over the past two years, indicating sustained long-term strength despite recent volatility," he said, adding that a fall below $3,200 would signal a structural

bearish shift.

Silver futures were at Rs 2,03,615, down 10.21% on Monday. Hareesh noted that despite escalating West Asia tensions, bullion has weakened due to macro pressures. "A strong US dollar and rising Treasury yields have increased holding costs and made dollar-priced metals expensive. Profit-taking and liquidity needs have also triggered selling after the earlier rally," he said.

Rising oil prices have further fuelled inflation concerns, delaying expectations of rate cuts and weighing on non-yielding assets. The World Gold Council said higher real yields, expectations of policy tightening in 2026, and deleveraging have hurt sentiment.

Deveya Gaglani, Senior Research Analyst — Commodities, Axis Securities, attributed the decline to multiple factors. "Markets are now pricing in the economic impact of a prolonged military presence. Inflation concerns have pushed expectations of a 50% chance of a US Federal Reserve rate hike by October, reversing earlier easing bets," he said. Gold, he added, is under pressure from rising yields, a stronger dollar and profit-booking.

On the technical front, Gaglani flagged weakening momentum. "Gold has closed below its 60-week EMA (Exponential Moving Average) for the first time since the 2025 rally, indicating a breakdown in the structural uptrend," he said, cautioning that failure to reclaim $4,300 could drag prices toward $4,000.

He advised against aggressive buying, recommending staggered accumulation near $4,000-4,100 for long-term portfolios.

Jateen Trivedi, VP and Research Analyst — Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, said downside levels of $4,000 and $3,600 remain open, though a de-escalation in tensions could trigger a rebound toward $5,000.

Renisha Chainani, Head of Research, Augmont, said gold's safe-haven status remains intact, though behaviour has shifted. "In periods of acute stress, markets prioritise liquidity over safety, leading investors to sell gold to raise cash," she said.

Gandhi concluded that while the correction may persist in the short term, prolonged geopolitical stress could revive demand, supporting a recovery over the medium to long term.

Investors take Rs 48.29 L cr hit in wealth amid West Asia war

Sensex plunges 1,836.57 points on Monday, as global cues bite

NEW DELHI, PTI

Investors' wealth has eroded by a whopping Rs 48.29 lakh crore since the start of the West Asia war on February 28, sending shock waves across global markets and driving the BSE Sensex lower by 10.56%.

Since the conflict began, the BSE benchmark Sensex has tumbled 8,590.8 points or 10.56%, and the NSE Nifty lost 2,666 points or 10.58%.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies eroded by Rs 48.29 lakh crore (Rs 48,29,041.45 crore) to Rs 415 lakh crore (Rs 4,15,21,629.82 crore) since then.

The US and Israel launched military strikes on Iran on February 28, killing Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader.

Following the military offensive, Iran has carried out a wave of attacks mainly targeting Israeli and American military bases in several Gulf countries, including the UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

The war in West Asia nearly closed the Strait of Hormuz — the narrow waterway between Iran and Oman that connects the oil and gas-producing Gulf countries to the rest of the world.

"The deepening Strait of Hormuz crisis, sustained pressure on the rupee, elevated energy prices, and continued foreign outflows are collectively driving a negative sentiment cycle," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

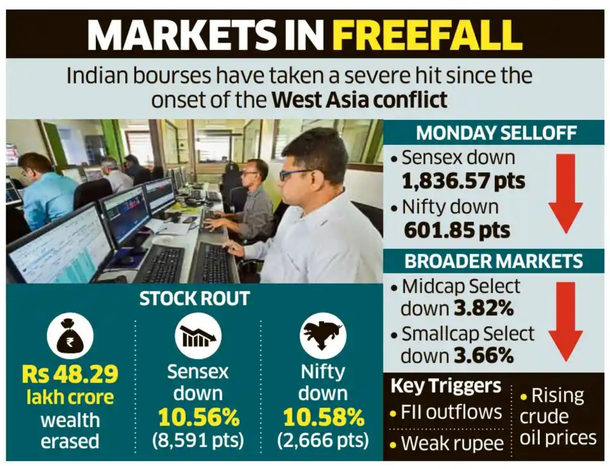
On Monday, the Sensex dived 1,836.57 points or 2.46% to settle at 72,696.39. The Nifty tanked 601.85 points or 2.60% to end at 22,512.65.

The BSE MidCap Select index tanked 3.82%, and the SmallCap Select index plunged 3.66%.

All sectoral indices ended lower. Consumer durables tumbled 4.91%, metal (4.76%), realty (4.75%), services (4.70%), BSE PSU Bank (4.39%), MidSmall Private Banks Quality Tilt (4.37%), commodities (4.35%), industrials (4.05%) and capital goods (3.99%).

A total of 3,798 stocks declined, while 635 advanced and 123 remained unchanged on the BSE.

"The sharp fall was primarily driven by weak global cues, escalating geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, and a surge in crude oil prices, which dampened investor sentiment. Additionally, continued FII selling and weakness in the Indian rupee further added to the negative momentum," Aakash Shah, Technical Research Analyst at Choice Equity Broking, said.


MARKETS IN FREEFALL
Indian bourses have taken a severe hit since the onset of the West Asia conflict
MONDAY SELLOFF
• Sensex down 1,836.57 pts
• Nifty down 601.85 pts
BROADER MARKETS
• Midcap Select down 3.82%
• Smallcap Select down 3.66%
STOCK ROUT
Rs 48.29 lakh crore wealth erased
Sensex down 10.56% (8,591 pts)
Nifty down 10.58% (2,666 pts)
Key Triggers
• FII outflows
• Weak rupee
• Rising crude oil prices

ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel plans Rs 1.36-L cr greenfield steel plant in Andhra

Aims to complete first phase of the project by 2028-29

GYANENDRA KESHRI
ANAKAPALLI (AP), DHNS

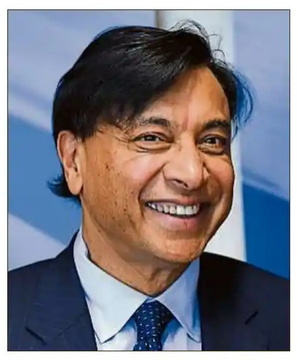
ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India, a joint venture between ArcelorMittal and Japan's Nippon Steel, on Monday laid the foundation stone for a greenfield steel project in Andhra Pradesh that will have the production capacity of 17.8 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA).

The company targets to invest Rs 1.36 lakh crore in the project in a phased manner.

In the first phase, which is targeted to be completed by 2028-29, the proposed investment is pegged at Rs 70,000 crore. Environment clearance has been given for the first phase of the project for the production capacity of 8.2 MMTPA.

The project is expected to generate nearly one lakh jobs, said Andhra Pradesh Minister for IT, Electronics & Communication and Human Resource Development Nara Lokesh.

Addressing a select media briefing, Lokesh said the Andhra Pradesh government has outlined plans to develop several industrial clusters in the state, including for steel, glass and horticulture.



Lakshmi Mittal

The minister informed that steel manufacturing operations at ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel's new plant at Rajayyapeta, located in Anakapalli district, is targeted to start by the first quarter of calendar year 2029.

The plant will produce a diverse range of steel grades, including high-quality, value-added products that will enhance India's self-reliance, reduce imports, and strengthen its manufacturing base.

"ArcelorMittal celebrates its twentieth anniversary later this year. For these last two decades, we had a vision to build a world-class greenfield steel plant here in India. This is my country. A country I love. A country I have always wanted to contribute to," said Lakshmi Mittal, Executive Chairman, ArcelorMittal.

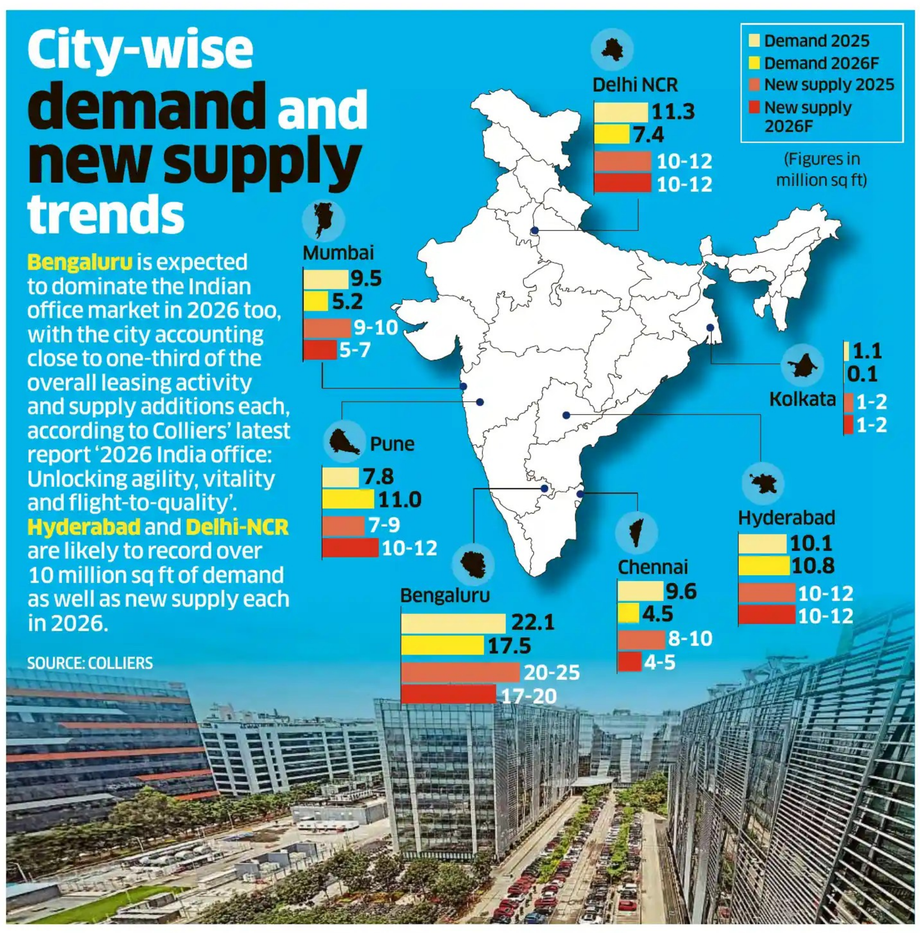
Mittal underlined that the demands for high-quality, domestically-produced steel would continue to rise in India with the high economic growth.

"Half-a-century has passed since I set up my first steel plant. I still remember the excitement of my early days — the sense that we were building something that mattered. I feel the same sense of possibility about what we are starting now," he added.

Union Minister of Steel & Heavy Industries HD Kumaraswamy said the Centre has taken a number of steps to boost investments in the steel sector. India targets to increase domestic crude steelmaking capacity to 300 million tonnes per annum by 2030-31.

Kumaraswamy said the ArcelorMittal-Nippon Steel collaboration to set up a new manufacturing unit brings together global expertise and domestic ambition to strengthen India's steel ecosystem. "I extend my best wishes to ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India and look forward to this facility contributing meaningfully to the growth and modernisation of the Indian steel industry," he added.

"This project is another strong example of Andhra Pradesh's status as a preferred investment destination and a reflection of strengthening global business confidence in our state," said Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu.


City-wise demand and new supply trends
Bengaluru is expected to dominate the Indian office market in 2026 too, with the city accounting close to one-third of the overall leasing activity and supply additions each, according to Colliers' latest report '2026 India office: Unlocking agility, vitality and flight-to-quality'. Hyderabad and Delhi-NCR are likely to record over 10 million sq ft of demand as well as new supply each in 2026.
SOURCE: COLLIERS
Demand 2025
Demand 2026F
New supply 2025
New supply 2026F
(Figures in million sq ft)
Delhi NCR 11.3 7.4 10-12 10-12
Mumbai 9.5 5.2 9-10 5-7
Kolkata 1.1 0.1 1-2 1-2
Pune 7.8 11.0 7-9 10-12
Bengaluru 22.1 17.5 20-25 17-20
Chennai 9.6 4.5 8-10 4-5
Hyderabad 10.1 10.8 10-12 10-12

Wipro launches Innovation Lab in Seoul, to invest in local talent

BENGALURU, DHNS: Wipro on Monday announced the expansion of its business operations in South Korea. The expansion includes an enlarged office footprint in Seoul, the launch of an Innovation Lab as part of the Wipro Innovation Network (WIN), and continued investment in local talent to support South Korean clients.

South Korea has emerged as a major global innovation hub, with leadership across semicon, advanced tech, automotive engineering, and industrial manufacturing. Wipro said its expanded presence reflects the growing importance of South Korea in shaping global innovation and the increasing demand from South Korean enterprises for AI-led transformation.

With the launch of the Seoul Innovation Lab, Wipro now operates nine innovation facilities globally, including five across the APMEA region.

Vinay Firake, CEO of APMEA Strategic Market Unit, Wipro Limited, said, "By strengthening local capabilities, connecting South Korea more deeply into our global delivery and innovation network, and co-innovating closely with clients, we aim to help enterprises translate innovation into measurable business outcomes."

The firm employs several hundred professionals in South Korea and continues to make sustained investments in the local ecosystem.

The Seoul Innovation Lab will serve as a space for collaboration with South Korean clients and ecosystem partners, enabling co-creation, rapid experimentation, and solution development. It will focus on technology, automotive, and industrial sectors, supporting use cases such as intelligent product engineering, software-defined vehicles, smart manufacturing, supply-chain optimisation, and AI-enabled operations.

Rupee breaches 94-level against USD intraday

MUMBAI, PTI: The rupee breached the 94-level against the US dollar for the first time on Monday, before closing flat at 93.53, amid a correction in global crude prices.

At the interbank forex, the local unit opened at 93.84 and breached the 94-mark against the US dollar for the first time in intraday trade. However, the unit recovered all lost ground to settle unchanged at 93.53.

The rupee went past the 93-mark against the greenback on Friday, after crashing 64 paise to settle at 93.53.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.14% higher at 99.78.

India proposes changes to companies law

NEW DELHI, REUTERS

India has proposed amendments to its companies law to allow some firms to undertake two share buybacks in a year from only one earlier, and to simplify procedures for "fast-track" mergers and acquisitions.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday presented the Corporate Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, in Lok Sabha, that aims to promote ease of doing business and simplify compliance and regulations. The Bill will become law after it is approved by both Houses of Parliament.

Nirmala Sitharaman

The proposed changes give flexibility to some companies to do two buybacks a year with a gap of at least six months, according to the Bill.

"Buyback through tender offers is an efficient way of returning surplus funds to shareholders and it is proposed to allow prescribed class of companies to avail such mechanism," it said. The category of companies would be notified by the Union Government.

For companies with strong cash flows and low leverage, this could become a faster and more efficient tool for capital distribution than paying out dividends, while also giving promoters and boards greater agility in managing capital structure and shareholder value, said Atul Pandey, Partner at law firm Khaitan & Co.

The government has also proposed decriminalising certain defaults under the companies law by replacing criminal provisions with civil penalties.

"The amendments aim to decriminalise more offences, enhance ease of doing business, and align India's corporate framework with global best practices," said Anjali Malhotra, Partner at law firm Nangia Global.

The Bill also proposes to ease compliance for Alternative Investment Funds registered as limited liability partnerships.

The government has proposed simplifying of procedures for fast-track mergers and amalgamations in deals where shareholders holding at least 75% in both firms approve the transaction. This would include mergers among holding firms and subsidiaries, small companies and startups, Malhotra added. The merger application can be filed before the company law tribunal having jurisdiction over the transferee company, according to the Bill.

The changes also clarify that companies undergoing liquidation under India's insolvency law cannot pursue mergers or enter into compromising arrangements.

CATCHING UP!

Quick commerce accounts for more than 70-75% of India's online grocery orders, says report

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Quick commerce now accounts for more than 70-75% of India's online grocery orders, and the expectation of 30 minutes or less delivery is influencing even modern trade and e-commerce.

While high-frequency categories such as groceries, beverages, snacks, personal care and household essentials benefit most from immediacy, speed directly drives choice and repeat purchase, according to KPMG in India's latest report, 'Winning India's Consumer Decade: The Precision-led GTM Blueprint for CXOs'. It stated that to compete, brands must build multi-node fulfilment models, including micro-fulfilment hubs, synchronised GT (General Trade)-MT-Q-commerce inventory, EV-enabled last-mile fleets, fuel-optimised routing, and end-to-end traceability.

The report highlighted that traditional go-to-market models are no longer fit for purpose, as 96% of Indian shoppers research products

online before making a purchase, and 46% check inventory before visiting a store. It said that the country's rapid adoption of quick commerce and hybrid retail formats is compressing delivery timelines and redefining competitive advantage across categories.

Interestingly, quick commerce now accounts for nearly 30% of the country's online FMCG sales, with the segment growing 70-80% year-on-year, shifting power toward control, visibility, speed and availability.

The report said that brands must redesign their go-to-market (GTM) strategies around micro-market precision, omnichannel orchestration and data-driven execution to capture the next wave of consumption growth.

It stated that today's consumer journey is increasingly digital-first, omnichannel and speed-driven. Nearly 80% of consumers discover new products via social media, significantly reshaping brand discovery, and 70% of urban Indian consumers use more than one channel before making a purchase decision.

Nikhil Sethi, National Leader – Consumer Goods and Co-Lead, Customer & Operations, KPMG in India, said, "India's consumer market is entering a decade defined by speed, precision and experience. Traditional go-to-market models built around broad distribution and national averages are no longer sufficient in a market where demand fragments across micro-markets and channels converge rapidly."

Organisations that win will be those that sense demand early, orchestrate channels intelligently and execute with precision at a local level, turning data, technology and supply-chain agility into a unified growth engine, Sethi added.

NIKHIL SETHI, National Leader – Consumer Goods and Co-Lead, Customer & Operations, KPMG in India

"Traditional go-to-market models built around broad distribution and national averages are no longer sufficient in a market where demand fragments across micro-markets and channels converge rapidly.

The report said that in precision-led GTM, sustainability plays a growing role, as both a compliance requirement and a growth lever. Consumers increasingly reward sustainable choices, and regulations tighten; embedding sustainability into GTM design strengthens both demand and resilience.

It said that in the country's next growth cycle, advantage increasingly shifts toward organisations with sharper, more adaptive operating models.

Kishore Alva is Assocham chair in Karnataka

BENGALURU, DHNS: Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry (ASSOCHAM) has selected Kishore Alva, Executive Director and President of Adani Group in Karnataka as Chairman of its Karnataka State Council for the year 2026-27. Alva brings over three decades of experience across energy, infrastructure, and international trade relations.

How schools can help children build responsibility habits

SURYAKUMARI DENNISON

We constantly hear complaints about children neglecting their duties. Lights and fans are left on, clothes lie strewn on couches, the floor is littered with empty snack packets, and mugs and glasses are dumped anywhere but in the sink. Just when it is time to leave for school, stationery inexplicably goes missing. Despite repeated parental admonitions, youngsters display a lamentable lack of responsibility.

Teachers can do their bit to redress this sorry situation. If they make it clear that on no account can pens and pencils be shared, and that one cannot peer into a neighbour's book, children are likely to pack their bags carefully.

Since items can get lost at school, students must ensure their belongings are secure before they leave for the day. They must be made to understand that items used at school are valuable,

not merely because of their cost; a textbook with notes jotted in the margins could be irreplaceable. When students come across something that has been mislaid, they should not purloin it but should hand it in to the school office.

While what is required of children at school may differ from the household tasks they are expected to perform, educational institutions can still serve as a training ground for moulding boys and girls into responsible individuals. Even if there are people to sweep and swab the school premises, students should be encouraged to make life easier for the cleaning crew by keeping their classrooms tidy. It may be fun to fashion rockets out of chocolate wrappers and aim them at waste-paper bins, but if those missiles miss their mark, they cannot be left outside like stranded spacecraft. If neatness is inculcated in children at school, they may keep their homes free of clutter.

Children with younger siblings may be more responsible in this regard than single children, since they may have to clean up after them. Still, even those conscientious siblings can do with guidance at school. If they are occasionally asked to monitor their juniors, they will find it easier to keep an eye on the people they care for at home.

Parents, reasonably enough, expect older children to help their younger siblings with their homework. The operative word is 'help'. A senior student should be ready to clarify doubts and simplify concepts, but he/she must refrain from doing entire assignments on another's behalf. Teachers must explain that getting somebody else to do one's homework is no less reprehensible than copying during a test. Students should be told that such shortcuts are counterproductive. As Carla Delos states in her book, 'Responsibility Rocks', "Cheating means you will not feel the thrill of being able to achieve something all by yourself."

The author points out that rules and responsibility go together. According to her, responsible children will follow the rules laid down for them. Actually, the reverse is also true. If rules are firmly in place, students will have no choice but to follow them, and consequently, develop a sense of duty and discipline. They may be rule-resistant at first, but slowly cease to be selfish, as they realise that regulations are meant for the greater good.

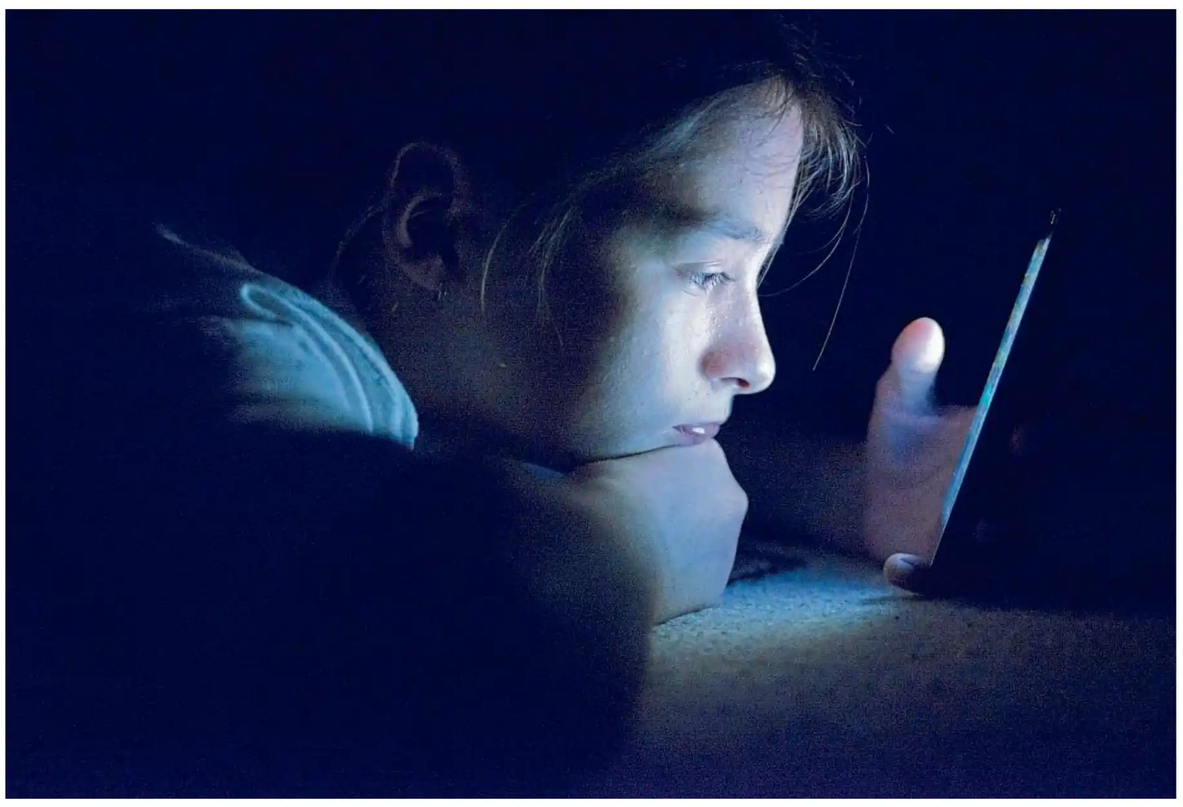
A golden rule is to remain silent during lessons. Quite apart from the fact that it is profitable for the teacher, who can progress uninterrupted, it benefits students who have to concentrate harder than others. Most importantly, children need to learn to listen. This will enable them to absorb advice and heed instructions, which will stand them in good stead at home.

At school orientation programmes, parents are constantly urged to cooperate with the teachers to enhance their children's academic progress. Teachers can return the favour by charting for those children, a roadmap to responsibility.

(The author is an educator)

Addressing digital addiction

Exposure to curated online content can lead to fear of missing out and harmful social comparisons, writes Anantha Padmanabhan



In an era where the "ping" of a notification often dictates the rhythm of daily life, the battle against smartphone addiction has moved from the dinner table to the halls of government. The Karnataka government proposed a ban on social media for children under the age of 16 recently, citing a "mental health epidemic" fuelled by unregulated digital consumption.

As part of the state's "Mobile Bidi, Pustaka Hidi" (Drop the Mobile, Hold a Book) initiative, this bold policy move underscores a growing global realisation that the dopamine-driven design of modern apps may be outstripping our collective ability to self-regulate.

While the ban has sparked intense debate over digital rights and parental versus state responsibility, the problem stems from easy access to smartphones and unregulated use.

Smartphones and screens divert attention from crucial developmental activities, hindering learning and social interaction. Constant exposure to curated online content can lead to fear of missing out and harmful social comparisons, contributing to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem.

Social media can be a breeding ground for cyberbullying, online grooming, and the promotion of self-harm and suicidal ideation, especially among vulnerable teens.

Recent research indicates that excessive internet use and addiction are associated with tangible alterations in brain chemistry. These changes, as evidenced by functional magnetic resonance imaging studies, affect crucial neural networks involved in executive functions such as memory, decision-making, and impulse control.

Specifically, this manifests as increased activity in resting brain regions and decreased connectivity in areas involved in active thinking, potentially resulting in addictive behaviours, tendencies towards mental health issues, developmental challenges, and even impaired physical coordination. This neurological reality underscores the urgency of addressing digital addiction proactively.

Addressing addiction proactively

Amidst this global challenge, promising initiatives are emerging. The Kerala Police's Digital De-Addiction Centre (D-DAD) programme is one example of a targeted intervention to reduce addiction.

Over the past two years, the D-DAD programme has reportedly succeeded in de-addicting 1,700 people, primarily aged 14-17, from excessive digital device use, including addiction to online games and social media. The success of this initiative in Kerala provides valuable insights into effective strategies for tackling digital addiction within the Indian context.

Drawing on these insights and other promising local experiences, along with global best practices, several crucial steps can be taken to navigate this challenge across India at both the societal and individual levels.

Here are some steps for a multi-faceted approach.

- Establishing family digital limits merits consideration. Such an approach involves families collaboratively creating healthy digital engagement strategies. This can include defining acceptable content, setting time limits for different types of online activities, and designating screen-free times, especially during family meals and before bedtime.
- Elders leading by example is crucial, with a conscious effort to avoid using phones during meals, never taking devices to bed, and identifying screen-free activities that promote offline engagement and strengthen family bonds.
- Judicious use of screen time for educational or connective purposes should be emphasised rather than passive consumption.
- Implementing comprehensive digital literacy education at the school level can help raise awareness about the risks of excessive internet use and the importance of balanced digital time.
- Active parental engagement in monitoring and guiding children's online activities, fostering open communication, and role-modelling healthy digital habits are crucial initiatives.
- Encouraging participation in sports, arts, cultural activities, and social interactions can provide healthy alternatives to excessive screen time.

These crucial steps, inspired by the success of the Kerala model and informed by global knowledge, offer a promising pathway for effectively addressing digital addiction across India.

The D-DAD programme offers a tangible blueprint for developing and scaling similar initiatives across other states, tailored to their unique cultural and socio-economic contexts. By strategically investing in such intervention programmes and proactively promoting digital literacy and responsible usage at the grassroots level, we can mitigate the harmful effects of digital addiction on youth.

This approach, coupled with macro-level interventions, such as taxing social media advertisements and making advertisements invisible for children, showing only age-appropriate content, and other innovative steps, can go a long way in making the ecosystem safe for students.

(The author is an independent writer)

BULLETIN BOARD

Motion graphics internship
Wonderkids.club is hiring a motion graphics intern who can work from home. Students with knowledge of Adobe Premiere Pro, CapCut, motion graphics, and video marketing can apply by April 17. The stipend is Rs 10,000 /month. Apply at: https://shorturl.at/miyA3.

Content management internship
Valstrand Solutions Private Limited is hiring a growth hacker (real estate) intern for ads and landing pages who can work from home. Students with knowledge of content management, digital marketing tools, lead generation, search engine optimisation (SEO), and social media marketing can apply by April 17. The stipend is Rs 15,000-30,000/month. Apply at: https://shorturl.at/97Fgd.

Digital marketing internship
Camp Automation is hiring a digital marketing intern in Bangalore. Students with knowledge of content management, digital advertising, effective communication, lead generation, search engine marketing and search engine optimisation can apply by April 17. The stipend is Rs 9,000-10,000/month. Apply at: https://shorturl.at/w6qVR.

Video internship
Adupon Solutions PVT LTD is hiring a video editing/making intern in Bangalore. Students with knowledge of Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Premiere Pro, and Final Cut Pro, as well as video editing, can apply by April 15. The stipend is Rs 5,000-10,000 /month. Apply at: https://shorturl.at/tNof6.

Questions? Suggestions? Feedback? Write to us at dheducation@deccanherald.co.in

Managing money right is as important as earning it

MAULLIKA SHARMA

For freshers entering the workforce, earning a salary feels like freedom. After years of depending on family support, that first pay cheque is a milestone. But earning money is only the beginning. The real skill — and one that will shape your wellbeing for years to come — is learning to manage it. Building a healthy relationship with money early on can make an enormous difference. The habits you build early will shape your future relationship with money.

Research shows that money is the biggest cause of stress. During a recent corporate training session on well-being, when we asked what participants could do to improve their sense of well-being, the first respondent said he would pay off all his loans!

People tend to underestimate how deeply money concerns affect their life. Financial well-being is closely tied to mental health, sense of security and even sleep. It can trigger anxiety, disrupt sleep and make it harder to concentrate at work because of a constant sense of uncertainty. Lack of sleep then affects judgment and decision-making — including financial decisions. This can become a vicious cycle: money worries disturb sleep, poor sleep leads to worse choices, and those choices create more financial stress. This cycle can impact productivity, relationships and overall health.

That is why managing money is not just a financial skill; it is a well-being skill.

It's all in the mindset

Financial stress is common, but manageable. Many young professionals assume that managing money requires complex calculations or expertise. However, the most influential factor in financial behaviour is psychology.

Our attitude toward money is often shaped by our "money scripts" — the unconscious beliefs that influence how we earn, spend and save.

Some people avoid thinking about money altogether. Others believe more income will solve their problems. Some associate

spending with status, while others become extremely cautious with money.

Understanding your own money mindset is a powerful first step. When you become aware of your patterns — whether it is impulse spending, avoiding bank statements or constantly comparing your lifestyle to others — you can begin to change them.

Face your finances, don't avoid them

A common response to financial anxiety is avoidance. People stop checking their accounts, ignore bills or delay conversations about money because they feel embarrassed or overwhelmed. This almost always makes it worse.

Taking control begins with understanding where your money goes. Review your bank accounts, credit card statements and monthly expenses. You may discover small spending habits that add up quickly — subscriptions you rarely use, frequent food deliveries or impulse online purchases.

Once you have clarity, you can start making intentional choices.

Needs, wants and conscious spending

A useful framework for managing money is separating needs from wants.

Needs are essential expenses such as rent, groceries, utilities and transportation. Without them, your basic well-being is affected. Wants are everything else — the nice-to-have purchases that make life enjoyable but are not necessary.

This does not mean you need to eliminate all your fun discretionary spending. Instead, it helps you prioritise what truly matters. Perhaps the gym membership supports your mental health and is worth keeping. Maybe the daily Rs 300 coffee or spending on a designer bag or T-shirt can be reduced. Maybe taking a loan on an appreciating asset is okay, but not on a depreciating asset or a lifestyle consumable like a phone or a holiday.

The goal is not perfection but awareness.

Build a simple spending plan

Many people dislike the word "budget," but a spending plan is simply a way of giving your money direction.

A basic plan should include five key categories:

- **Fixed expenses:** rent, loan repayments or insurance
- **Flexible expenses:** groceries, utilities and transport
- **Unexpected expenses:** medical or family emergencies, or sudden repairs
- **Lifestyle spending:** dining out, shopping or entertainment
- **Savings:** future goals and financial security

Even small amounts set aside regularly - paying a little extra towards a loan or adding a small sum to savings each month - can gradually reduce financial stress.

Remember, progress matters more than perfection.

Watch emotional spending

Do you spend more when you are tired, stressed or frustrated? After a difficult day at work, it can feel comforting to click "buy now" or treat yourself to something expensive.

While occasional treats are normal, emotional spending can quickly undermine your financial goals. So, pause before any purchase to ask yourself: Do I need it? Can I afford it? Will I use it? Is it worth it?

Often, that short moment of reflection is enough to prevent impulse spending.

Talk about money

Money remains one of the most uncomfortable topics in many social circles. Yet silence increases stress.

Being honest with friends about financial priorities can strengthen relationships. If you are saving for something important, suggest lower-cost activities — a walk, a movie night at home or a picnic instead of an expensive dinner. You might be surprised to find others feel the same pressure but were hesitant to say so. And in the current age of social media, where every outing and every meal gets a mention, it is very easy to fall into the trap of seeing these expenses as "needs" rather than "wants". Having the right kind of visibility on social media can feel like a "need".

Small decisions, big impact

Financial well-being comes from small, consistent decisions: tracking spending, cancelling unnecessary subscriptions, setting goals and making mindful purchases.

Your first paycheck is more than income — it is an opportunity and gives you choices. With the right mindset and habits, you can build not only financial stability but also greater peace of mind.

Managing money well is not just about wealth. It is about well-being! And the one easy hack for my financial well-being is staying away from designer labels!

(The author is a counsellor and wellness coach)

Analysis shows how AI use can be smart

A study of 1.4 million real workplace interactions with artificial intelligence reveals clear, teachable differences between routine and sophisticated AI use—offering organisations a practical roadmap for scaling high-impact AI capability.

Conducted by KPMG LLP and the McCombs School of Business at The University of Texas at Austin, the research identifies observable patterns in how top users frame problems, guide AI reasoning, and apply AI to complex tasks. The findings, published in Harvard Business Review, are already shaping KPMG's internal practices and client work.

Over eight months, researchers analysed AI use across KPMG's back-office operations. The most effective users—labelled "sophisticated"—were not simply frequent users or technical experts. Instead, they stood out for how they engaged with AI: framing problems clearly, directing the model's approach, and integrating AI into broader workflows.

To define "good" AI use, researchers examined more than 30 behavioural signals, including task complexity, prompting techniques, and iteration patterns. Rather than identifying abstract "power users," they focused on individuals who had learned to think with the model, not just query it.

Sophisticated users consistently treated AI as a reasoning partner. They assigned roles or perspectives, provided clear instructions and examples, and required explanations for outputs. They refined responses through multiple iterations and applied AI to complex, high-value tasks. They also set boundaries, defined structure, and used AI across brainstorming, analysis, and problem-solving—treating it as a general cognitive tool rather than a simple productivity aid.

These behaviours produced measurable patterns. Sophisticated use correlated with four signals: frequent return to AI, persistent refinement of outputs, ambitious initial requests, and intentional tool selection. Only about 5% of users consistently demonstrated these traits.

KPMG has translated these insights into firmwide training and enablement programs. By embedding AI-first behaviours into learning systems—through structured training, playbooks, and peer networks—the firm is helping employees move from basic prompting to high-impact collaboration.

These same principles now guide how KPMG supports clients in defining effective AI use, building role-specific capabilities, and scaling human-AI collaboration across everyday work.

-CURATED BY DHNS/PHYS.ORG

DYF wins Golconda St Leger

HYDERABAD RESULTS

DYF, trained by Adhiraj S Jodha and ridden by P Trevor, lived up to its top billing by landing the spoils in the Golconda St Leger, a Grade 3 race over 2800M, the main event of the races held here on Monday.

1. Osman Sagar Plate (Div II) 1100M: Shooting Star (BR Kumar) 1; Cypress (Kuldeep Singh) 2; Aquatone (Ashhad Asbar) 3; Pranava (B Nikhil) 4; WB: 1, 2, 3-1/4L; T: 1:07.39; TB: RH Sequeira; Fav: Cypress.

2. Yadadri Plate (Div II) 1100M: Buddy (Mukesh Kumar) 1; Yali (Antony Raj S) 2; Quattro (Santosh Raj NR) 3; Trishika (P Trevor) 4; WB: 3-1/4, 2-1/4, 2L; T: 1:05.44; TB: Magan Singh; Fav: Yali.

3. Osman Sagar Plate (Div I) 1100M: Petra Act (Mukesh Kumar) 1; Clarity (Ajay Kumar) 2; Briar Ridge (Surya Prakash) 3; Quality Warrior (Md Ismail) 4; NR: The Purpose; WB: 2, 2-1/4, 5-1/4L; T: 1:07.28; TB: Magan Singh; Fav: Roxxane.

4. Sea Bird Plate 1100M: NRI High Power (Mukesh Kumar) 1; Sharanga (Antony Raj S) 2; Foxy Girl (Afroz Khan) 3; Lazarus (Rafique SK) 4; WB: 5-1/2, 1-1/2, 3/4L; T: 1:05.55; TB: D Netto; Fav: NRI High Power.

5. Golconda St Leger (Gr 3) 2800M: DYF (P Trevor) 1; Ramiel (Antony Raj S) 2; Get Lucky (Mukesh Kumar) 3; Victor Hugo (Akshay Kumar) 4; WB: 3/4, 2, 1-1/4L; T: 3:07.66; TB: Adhiraj S Jodha; Fav: DYF.

6. Dream Girl Plate 1400M: Knight Regent (P Trevor) 1; Blue Pantheress (BR Kumar) 2; Life's Journey (G Naresh) 3; Sangreal (Ajay Kumar) 4; WB: 2-1/2, 1/2, 4-1/4L; T: 1:27.13; TB: LVR Deshmukh; Fav: Knight Regent.

7: Pocharam Plate 1600M: Genie (Md Ekram Alam) 1; Anemoi (Surya Prakash) 2; NRI Star (P Trevor) 3; Desert Sultan (Md Ismail) 4; NR: Secret Option; WB: 2, 2-1/2, 2L; T: 1:42.59; TB: K Satheesh; Fav: Take A Breath.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 53w, Rs 13, Rs 10, Rs 11p; Fc: Rs 127; Q: Rs 59; SHP: Rs 23; THP: 47; Tri: Rs 162 & Rs 67; Exp: Rs 1207 & Rs 1149. **II race:** Rs 67w, Rs 16, Rs 10, Rs 18p; Fc: Rs 154; Q: Rs 37; SHP: Rs 37; THP: Rs 43; Tri: Rs 324 & Rs 259; Exp: Rs 884 & Rs 463. **III race:** Rs 36w, Rs 16, Rs 15, Rs 14p; Fc: Rs 191; Q: Rs 131; SHP: Rs 37; THP: Rs 35; Tri: Rs 471 & Rs 300; Exp: Rs 4172 & Rs 1987. **IV race:** Rs 31w, Rs 12, Rs 13, Rs 13p; Fc: Rs 73; Q: Rs 41; SHP: Rs 39, THP: Rs 38; Tri: Rs 168 & Rs 114; Exp: Rs 4873 & Rs 4177. **V race:** Rs 21w, Rs 13, 29p; Fc: Rs 147; Q: Rs 80; SHP: Rs 46; THP: Rs 88; Tri: Rs 1413 & Rs 570; Exp: Rs 3185 & Rs 1365. **VI race:** Rs 12w, Rs 10, Rs 17, Rs 15p; Q: Rs 45; SHP: Rs 36; THP: Rs 30; Tri: Rs 93 & Rs 46; Exp: Rs 452 & Rs 443. **VII race:** Rs 32w, Rs 15, Rs 11, Rs 14; Q: Rs 128; SHP: Rs 45; THP: Rs 37; Tri: Rs 1135 & Rs 317; Exp: 18772.79 (C/O).

I jackpot: Rs 1011 & Rs 119. **I treble:** Rs 671. **II treble:** Rs 100.

Truth tipped for Telangana Plate

HYDERABAD SELECTIONS

Truth, trained by S Sreekant and to be ridden by Imran Chisty, is tipped to land the spoils in the Telangana Plate over 1600M, the main event of the races to be held here on Tuesday. The first race starts at 3 pm.

1. Business Tycoon Plate 1400M: Catchme If You Can 1; NRI Skypower 2; Exclusive Luck 3.

2. Rising Star Plate 1200M: Advait 1; The Last Avtar 2; Excalibur 3.

3. Brave Hunter Plate 1200M: Greif 1; Emerald Touch 2; Turiya 3.

4. Medchal Plate 1200M: Onslaught 1; Arthisha 2; Konaseema 3.

5. Khammam Plate 1800M: Corte Madera 1; Andre' 2; China Town 3.

6. Telangana Plate 1600M: Truth 1; NRI Superpower 2; Cherie Chevalier 3.

7. Malvado Plate 1100M: Dhanadeepa 1; Noorian 2; Niloufer The Great 3.

Day's best: Corte Madera.

SUMMER CAMPS

Chess camp from April 1

▸ Champions Chess Academy will be conducting a summer camp from April 1-30, reports DHNS.

FIDE-rated and national player Balakrishna Prabhu will conduct the camp.

For details, visit www.championschessacademy.com or call: 9845466416.

BAC camp from March 26

▸ The Basavanagudi Aquatic Centre will be conducting its summer swimming camp from March 26 in three batches, reports DHNS.

The first batch is from March 26-April 17, the second from April 18-May 10 and the third from May 7-29.

For details, contact: 9972737607/ 9844462077.

ATHLETICS WORLD INDOORS

Hodgkinson headlines Britain's Super Sunday

24-year-old smashes 800m WR after compatriots Bell, Caudery triumph

TORUN (POLAND), AFP

Britain's Keely Hodgkinson celebrates her victory in women's 800m at the World Athletics Indoor Championships in Torun, Poland on Sunday night. AFP

Keely Hodgkinson headlined a 'Super Sunday' for Britain at the World Indoor Athletics Championships as she stormed to victory in the 800m just minutes after team-mates Georgia Hunter Bell and Molly Caudery had also triumphed.

Hodgkinson was then back on the track to anchor the British women's team in the championship-ending 4x400m relay, but they could only finish fifth in a race won by the USA.

Hodgkinson set a new world indoor record over 800m last month and proceeded to clock the second fastest time ever run over the distance for a stunning individual victory—and a first global gold.

She was welcomed at the line by training partner Hunter Bell, who had just won the 1,500m, and Caudery, winner of the women's pole vault. The three golds came within the space of 28 minutes.

"There has been a lot going on in the last hour - everything seems a bit blurry to me!" said Hodgkinson, hailing herself and her gold medal-winning teammates as "three great examples" of British girls.

Hunter Bell had impressively reeled in Ethiopian front-runner Birke Haylom at the bell to produce a crushing final lap in her race.

She clocked 3:58.53 for gold — her first global victory after world indoor bronze last year, an Olympic bronze in the 1,500m and world outdoor silver in the 800m.

Caudery, who previously won world indoor gold in Glasgow in 2024, was also not to be denied, clearing 4.85m to see off the challenge from Slovenia's Tina Sutej.

It was some reward for an athlete who went out of the heats at the Paris Olympics and was unable to compete at last year's world outdoors in Tokyo after sustaining an injury in the warm-up.

"This gold means so much more this time. I had a really tough two years so I really needed this," she said.

"Two years ago in Glasgow it was a 'Super Sunday' for GB as Josh Kerr and I won gold medals, today feels like a 'Super Sunday', too. It's like repeating history but even better. Georgia and Keely have been amazing and I could have not wished for a better evening."

Charlton matches WR

In a heedy night's track and field, Devynne Charlton of the Bahamas matched her own world record when she defended her 60m hurdles title in 7.65 seconds.

Spain's Mariano Garcia won the men's 1,500m crown, outsprinting Portugal's world champion Isaac Nader for victory in 3:39.63.

Garcia became the first athlete in world indoor history to win titles at both the 800 and 1,500m, having won the former in Belgrade in 2022.

Cooper Lutkenhaus won the 800m this time around, the 17-year-old American prodigy clocking 1:44.24 for gold to confirm his status as an absolute track star in the making.

Belgium's silver medallist Eliott Crestan said the American was "an incredible talent winning at 17 years of age. I think he can be the future Rudisha", in reference to the Kenyan legend David. Sofie Dokter of the Netherlands claimed gold in the pentathlon with 4,888 points, 28 ahead of American Anna Hall, while Portugal's Gerson Balde won the men's long jump with a best of 8.46m and the US team won the men's 4x400m relay.

Vinicius Real hero in derby

Brazilian's brace powers Madrid to thrilling 3-2 win over Atletico

MADRID, AFP

Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior (left) celebrates after scoring against Atletico Madrid during their La Liga clash at Santiago Bernabeu on Sunday. AFP

Vinicius Junior struck twice as Real Madrid shaded Atletico Madrid 3-2 in a thrilling derby clash on Sunday to stay on leaders Barcelona's tail at the top of La Liga.

After the Catalan giants edged Rayo Vallecano 1-0 earlier, Madrid ensured the gap to the champions stayed at four points by beating Diego Simeone's side at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Ademola Lookman put Atletico ahead in the first half but Vinicius and Federico Valverde's strikes gave the hosts the lead soon after the interval.

Nahuel Molina equalised for Atletico, fourth, with a spectacular effort from distance but Vinicius netted again to claim the three points for Los Blancos.

Valverde was sent off for hacking Alex Baena in the final stages but his side held on to win in Alvaro Arbeloa's first derby clash with Atletico since taking over in January.

"We showed mental toughness and strength worthy of this club's badge," Arbeloa told reporters, proud of his team's effort with 10 men.

"It made things hard for us and we had to suffer a lot."

After ousting Manchester City in the Champions League last 16 on Tuesday, victory against Atletico completed a successful week for Arbeloa and his team.

"We're evolving and working hard so that in games like these Madrid fans can be happy, that the fans can enjoy themselves and that Madrid always win," Vinicius told Real Madrid TV.

"Everyone deserves credit, the coach, the players, the fans, all the work we've done this week. We were sure of our game plan from the start and that made all the difference."

Vinicius's double brought him to 10 goals in his last 11 matches across all competitions.

"I'm very happy because I've worked all season for games like this," added Vinicius. "When this moment of the season arrives, I don't know why, I always improve."

Arbeloa has praised Vinicius since his first day at the helm and brought the best out of the forward after a barren spell under Xabi Alonso.

"Another great game from Vinicius, another demonstration of bravery and character," said Arbeloa.

"A great goal to give us victory in a tricky moment, I'm so lucky to have him, for his commitment and his talent."

Arbeloa sent on Jude Bellingham as a substitute for his first appearance since February 1 after a hamstring injury, along with French superstar Kylian Mbappe, who returned midweek from a knee sprain.

Result: Real Madrid: 3 (Vinicius 52nd, 72nd, Valverde 55th) bt Atletico Madrid: 2 (Lookman 33rd, Molina 66th).

Can't play surrounded by warships: Humpy

NEW DELHI, PTI

Indian chess great Koneru Humpy stood firm on her decision to pull out of the Candidates tournament in Cyprus later this month, saying one cannot be "surrounded by warships" and still play peacefully, while asserting she is "not scared" of penalties and is not playing for monetary benefits.

Humpy, the two-time World Rapid champion and one of the four Indians qualified to compete in the Candidates in Cyprus from March 28, pulled out of the prestigious event citing safety concerns amid the ongoing Gulf conflict, given the island's proximity to the volatile region.

Earlier this month, a drone strike on a UK base heightened fears in the region, prompting Humpy to pull out. She has since been replaced by Ukrainian Grandmaster Anna Muzychuk.

"You can't play surrounded by warships, which is guarding the island (Cyprus). If a foreigner like me and being a woman, if I have to travel and that too for such an important tournament, how can I play peacefully?" Humpy said on Monday.

With her late withdrawal, Humpy is the only one among the 16 contestants -- eight in the Open and eight in the women's section -- to pull out, and while there could be a hefty financial penalty, she said she is not scared.

"See, that's the point. That is why they (international chess federation FIDE) keep these things (penalties) so that players will not speak out the facts. No, I'm not scared about it. I'm not playing just for money or monetary benefits. I just enjoy the sport," Humpy said, adding that she had put in three months of strenuous preparation for the event, even being unable to spend quality time with her daughter.

"The past three months, I have been only working for this tournament. I haven't spent quality time with my daughter also. So, if a player like me is skipping the tournament, it's not fun for me to skip such an important tournament. I'm losing a lot of things."

She said the event could have been postponed by a month or moved to another location without making a significant difference.

"They could host the tournament anywhere in the world. Or, if they were particular about holding it in Cyprus, they could have waited for the situation to settle down.

"They could wait for another month or so. The tensions would ease and there wouldn't be any hazards," said the stalwart, who qualified for the Candidates after finishing runner-up at the Women's World Cup last year.

Koneru Humpy says she's not perturbed by the possibility of being fined by FIDE for skipping the Candidates tournament in Cyprus. PTI FILE PHOTO

Aditi finishes T-14 in Founders Cup

MENLO PARK (CALIFORNIA), PTI: Aditi Ashok bounced back from her third-round disappointment with a 3-under 69 on the final day to finish tied 14th at the Fortinet Founders Cup here.

Hyo Joo Kim won the title, while Nelly Korda finished second.

In her final round, Aditi carded four birdies and one bogey to finish the week at 8-under par. Three of her birdies came on the front nine, with the other on the back nine, which also included her lone bogey.

She picked up shots on the fourth, sixth, ninth and 11th holes, while her only bogey came on the 15th.

The T-14 finish moved Aditi to the 20th position on the CME rankings, one better than last week.

The winner, Hyo Joo Kim, had built a five-stroke lead over her closest rival Nelly Korda heading into the final round.

New-look India aim to set the tone for season

BANGKOK, PTI

Rishabh Yadav will be leading India's charge in the Asia Cup Stage 1 that kicks off in Bangkok on Tuesday.

India will kick start the new international archery season with a fresh-faced squad at the Asia Cup Stage 1, banking on a blend of exciting teenagers and returning veterans instead of established stars in the tournament beginning here on Tuesday.

The team will be without Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat, Dhiraj Bommadevara, Tarundeep Rai, Jyothi Surekha Vennam and Abhishek Verma as the Indian think-tank wants to use the continental opener to test bench strength ahead of a packed season culminating in the Asian Games in Japan come September-October.

The top Indian archers, however, will be back in action with the World Cup's first two legs in Puebla (Mexico) and Shanghai April onwards.

Despite the absence of its marquee archers, the overall champions would be firm favourites. In the last year's opening leg, India topped the tally with eight medals, including five gold. The team will look to maintain its dominance on the Asia Cup circuit which has been given a miss by the world heavyweights South Korea.

In Korea's absence, India's main rivals would be China and Bangladesh.

In the recurve men's section, Australia's Ryan Tyack is the top-ranked archer with a ranking of world No. 27, while the women's section has Russian-born neutral athlete Nurinisso Makhmudova (No. 45) as the highest-ranked archer.

The spotlight will firmly be on the formidable Indian men's compound unit, spearheaded by world No. 4 Rishabh Yadav alongside Asian Games gold medallist Prathamesh Jawkar and the seasoned Rajat Chauhan. They will look to defend the title. Last year, Kushal Dalal was the individual champion. He, along with Manav Jadhao and Ganesh Thirimuru, had won the team gold.

McCullum keeps Eng job after Ashes review

LONDON, AFP: England coach Brendon McCullum will keep his job despite the team's Ashes debacle, with cricket chief Richard Gould insisting he can "adapt and evolve".

Ben Stokes's men were hammered 4-1 on their five-Test tour of Australia, which started in November and ended in January.

In addition to their poor performances there were reports of excessive drinking by players while they were on a break, raising concerns about the dressing-room culture.

Revelations followed that vice-captain Harry Brook had been involved in an altercation with a nightclub bouncer on the pre-Ashes visit to New Zealand.

But Stokes, McCullum, and England managing director Rob Key will all keep their jobs following a review of the Ashes campaign by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB).

McCullum, at the helm since 2022, has been responsible for England's aggressive "Bazball" approach to red-ball cricket.

But his aggressive methods have failed to yield a series win against India or Australia -- England's two major rivals.

CA refuses to take Test pitch control

MELBOURNE, PTI: Cricket Australia has ruled out taking greater control over Test pitch preparation, insisting that local curators are best placed to deliver good, unique surfaces despite criticism following the costly Ashes series earlier this year.

Following the two-day finishes in the Perth and MCG Tests, which cost CA nearly AUD 15 million (Rs 98 crore approximately) in revenue, the quality of the state pitches came under intense scrutiny. CA CEO Todd Green had also admitted that short Tests are "bad for business".

But despite the losses, CA is reluctant to opt for a centralised model.

"It's inconceivable that we could ever control much more than we do now," said Peter Roach, CA's head of operations.

"In England, you could put in a central curator to go around or New Zealand, or South Africa, because the wickets and the clays and the climates are so similar.

East Bengal script historic 7-0 win

KOLKATA, PTI: East Bengal FC slammed a barrage of goals to script a historic 7-0 win over Mohammedan Sporting Club in the Kolkata derby in the Indian Super League 2025-26 here on Monday.

This massive win marks the largest victory margin in history between the two sides and is also the joint-highest in ISL history, equalling FC Goa's 7-0 win over Mumbai City FC in 2015.

Following this emphatic result, the Red and Gold Brigade climbed to fourth in the standings with 11 points from six matches, while Mohammedan Sporting Club remained near the bottom, yet to open their account after five matches. Anwar Ali, who was adjudged Player of the Match, scored a brace. Apart from him -- with goals in the 6th and 79th minutes -- the other scorers were Youssef Ezzejjari (14th, 54th --both penalties), Saúl Crespo (38th, penalty), PV Vishnu (75'th) and Nandha Kumar (90th+6).

Government of karnataka (Zilla Panchayat Haveri)
Office of The District Health and Family Welfare office Haveri
#21, 'B' Block District Administration Building, Devagiri
✉ : dhohaveri@gmail.com ☎ : 08375-249049
Fax : 08375-249009 : 9449843054
REF: DHFWO/C-1(B)/60/2025-26 Date: 20-03-2026

E-Tender Notification

Sub : Inviting Tender for Engagement of Manpower (Staff Nurse, DEO's & Group-D's) On outsource contract basis through E- Procurement.
Ref : Approval note form Chief Executive Officer, ZP Haveri dated: 18/03/2026

Sealed tender in two bid system are invited for engagement of agencies from Registered/Well-established Manpower service providers for providing contractual manpower (outsource) viz. Staff Nurses, Data Entry Operators & Group-D's for the year 2026-27 to work in various Health centers of Haveri district. The manual bids shall not be accepted.
2. The estimated cost for one year will be about Rs. **246** Lakhs (Two Hundred Fourty Six Lakhs). The amount of EMD security deposit is Rs. **6.15** Lakhs (Six Lakhs Fifteen Thousand)
3.Tender Document can be downloaded from (www.kppp.karanataka.gov.in) as per schedule given here under **Attributes** : (1) Tender Publish Date : **24/03/2026** (2) Tender Value (Approximate) Rs. **246.00** Lakhs, (3) Bid Submission End Date : **07/04/2026** Time: 4.00 PM (4) Technical Bid Opening Date : **08/04/2026** Time: 4.00 PM (5) Financial Bid Opening : Will be intimate later (6) Earnest Money Deposit to be submitted (EMD) Rs. **6.15** Lakhs (Six Lakhs Fifteen thousand only) (7) Prebid Meeting Date / Place and Liaison Officer / address Date : **02/04/2026** at 11.00 am, District Health & Family Welfare Officer, Haveri, Ph: 08375-249049-249066

Sd/- District Health and Family Welfare officer Haveri
DIPR/HVR/KSMCA/836/2025-26

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(THROUGH KARNATAKA PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PORTAL MODE ONLY)

KPTCL invites bid against the following enquiries;

No: CEE/Tr(OP)ZB/SEE(O)/AE-2/NEL-482(3)/2025-26/11868 Date: 23.03.2026

1. Enquiry No: KPTCL/CEE/T(O)Z/BZ/PTK-17/CALL-3 for the work "Providing new Bank-3 along with 1CX1000Sqmm UG Cable run from 31.5MVA Power Transformer-2 to new bank-3 at **66/11kV Alur sub-station** coming under Operations Division, Nelamangala in Bengaluru North Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District on **Partial Turnkey Basis** including supply of all matching materials/equipments **(Excluding Switchgear)** and erection (including civil works) of all materials/equipments, testing and commissioning".

No: CEE/Tr(OP)ZB/SEE(O)/AE-2/F-483(1)/Battery Set/2025-26/11869 Date: 23.03.2026

2. Enquiry No: KPTCL/CEE/T(O)Z/BZ/2025-26/04/Battery Sets/CALL-2, for "Design, Manufacture, Testing and Supply of **2 sets of 220V, 600AH Plante/Grid type Battery sets under Buy Back Scheme** for Operations Division, Nelamangala coming under Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL, Bengaluru conforming to Technical Specifications. F.O.R.D at Store/Site basis, including insurance, transportation and unloading"

The Bids will be received through electronic tender mode only. The detailed notification regarding the subject enquires in the E-tendering process can be obtained by logging into KPP Portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or after 24.03.2026.** Other details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Electy)., Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL, A.R.Circle, Bengaluru - 560 009

IN BRIEF

Chethan, Indu named captains

▸ Chethan S and Indu G will lead Karnataka's boys' and girls' teams respectively in the the fourth Junior National Netball Championship, to be held at the Shree Pyareji Maharaj Sports Academy, Jaula, Uttar Pradesh, from March 27-29, reports DHNS.
Boys: Akshay HA, Chethan S (capt), Vivek R (vice-capt), Thanmai Gowda P, Satwik SV, Varun K, 07 Ravi Raj R, Rudra Prasad, Muthuraj CR, Aryan Shet. **Coach:** Rohith PD.
Girls: Deepthi HS, Indu G (capt), Tanvi VH (vice-capt), Likhitha M, Nithyashree KY, Falak Hassan, Supriya HS, Nivedhitha HM, S Hari Priya, R Disha. **Coach:** Sahana V. **Manager:** Teju P.

Dhyanchand HC snatch a draw

▸ Nithin, Vivek Ramakrishna and Lehnn Aiyyapa found the back of the net as Dhyanchand Hockey Club, Bangalore came back from two goals down to snatch a 3-3 draw against Garuda Hockey Club in the KSHA 'B' Division hockey league championship at the Shantinagar hockey stadium on Monday, reports DHNS.
Result: Garuda Hockey Club: 3 (Sethu Pandian 9th, Hari Haran 12th, Mahesh 24th) drew with Dhyanchand Hockey Club, Bangalore: 3 (Nithin 20th, Vivek Ramakrishna 40th, Lehnn Aiyyapa 43rd).

Rajajinagar post 8-0 victory

▸ Kaviarasan and Abhishek A scored a brace each as Rajajinagar trounced Jayanagar 8-0 in the second edition of the Chief Minister's Cup football tournament at the BFS on Monday, reports DHNS.
Results: Rajajinagar: 8 (Kaviarasan 6th, 90th, Deepan A 35th pen, Madhavan H 51st, Sebastin Raj 7th, Abhishek A 79th, 85th, Surya Prakash B 90th+2) bt Jayanagar: 0; Sarvagnanagar: 2 (Sunil Kumar M 14th, 59th) bt Byatarayanapura: 1 (Maria Dinesh J 28th).

Pool Nationals from today

▸ The country's top cueists, including multiple-time World champion Pankaj Advani, have descended on Ludhiana, Punjab, for the pool National Championships that gets underway at the Rotary Bhawan on Tuesday, reports DHNS.
Competition will be held for men, women and juniors (U-21 boys and girls) in both the 9-ball and 10-ball events.

Veteran scribe Thyagu no more

▸ Veteran Indian sports journalist S Thyagarajan (85), who carved a niche for himself with his extensive coverage of hockey, died in Chennai on Monday after battling age-related ailments, reports PTI.
Thyagarajan, who covered six Olympics and nine Asian Games, served The Hindu newspaper from 1962 to 2013 before his retirement. He started his career with 'The Indian Express' in 1961.

Rajshekhar clinches title

BENGALURU, DHNS: JP Nagar Club's Rajshekhar clinched the first-ever Catholic Club Inter-Club chess event here on Saturday.
Catholic Club's Craig D'Mello and Suyash Harshvardhana finished second and third respectively.
The tournament was held in rapid format with a time control of 10 minutes plus five-second increment per move over five-rounds.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET
3rd T20I: West Indies vs Australia Women **(4 am)**. **LIVE** on **FanCode**.

FOOTBALL
IFL: Aizawl FC vs Chanmari FC **(6:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Ten 5** & **SonyLIV**.

Under new captain Parag, Jaipur franchise looks to end title drought

Dawn of a new era for RAJASTHAN ROYALS

MADHU JAWALI
BENGALURU, DHNS

IPL 2026 — 4 days to go

Despite having some of the most famous names on their roster over the years, Rajasthan Royals remain one of the least glamorous teams in the Indian Premier League. Though there is no clear logical explanation for this image, they rather seem to thrive staying under the radar. While a second title has eluded the Jaipur franchise for the last 17 years, they have always remained credible contenders thanks to their adeptness in assembling genuine match-winners along with a capable support cast.

The upcoming season heralds a new era for the Royals following one of the most surprising and talked-about trade-offs. Sanju Samson was exchanged for senior spinning all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, whose IPL journey began with the Royals and who have now entrusted Riyan Parag with the captaincy. Parag, according to Head Coach Kumar Sangakkara was chosen for the job after a "very strict interview process."

A gun batter on his day with a knack for breaking partnerships through his assortment of part-time off-break and leg-break deliveries, Parag's leadership skills will be tested in a high-pressure league. While he isn't new to the IPL cauldron, the burden of expectations can weigh heavily even on seasoned players.

However, preparations for the season haven't been smooth. Just weeks before their opener, Rajasthan suffered a major setback with England all-rounder Sam Curran being ruled out due to injury. Losing a player of Curran's calibre, especially the one who offers balance with both bat and ball, is far from ideal. It disrupts team combinations and forces management to rethink their plans at a crucial stage. He has since been replaced by Sri Lanka's Dasun Shanaka, who cancelled his contract with the Pakistan Premier League.

That said, the Royals still have enough firepower to stay competitive. Their batting unit, in particular, looks capable of compensating for the loss. Yashasvi Jaiswal remains the fulcrum at the top, bringing aggression and maturity in equal measure. Alongside him, the young Vaibhav Sooryavanshi adds an element of intrigue -- his inclusion reflects the franchise's philosophy of nurturing emerging talent.

The middle-order will need to step up as well, and this is where Parag's role becomes even more crucial as a batter who can control the tempo of an innings and guide less experienced players around him.

Jofra Archer's return provides a significant boost to their attack, offering genuine pace and wicket-taking ability. If he stays fit through the tournament, he could be the difference-maker in close contests. His presence alone adds an edge to the attack that not many teams can match.

Jadeja's inclusion further strengthens the bowling unit. His experience and control, combined with Ravi Bishnoi's attacking leg-spin, give Rajasthan a well-rounded spin department. On slower surfaces, especially at home, this duo could play a decisive role in dictating terms and putting opposition batters under pressure.

Of course, there are still concerns. The relative lack of experienced Indian batters in the lineup has raised eyebrows, and it remains to be seen how the team adapts if early results don't go their way. Much will depend on how quickly the new combinations settle and whether younger players can handle the demands of the tournament.

Ultimately, Rajasthan Royals once again find themselves in a familiar position -- capable, yet not the centre of attention. If Parag grows into his leadership role and key players stay fit, they have the tools to surprise any side in the league.

The squad: Riyan Parag (captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubham Dubey, Vaibhav Suryavanshi, Dhruv Jurel, Lhuan-Dre Pretorius, Shimron Hetmyer, Yudhvir Singh Charak, Jofra Archer, Tushar Deshpande, Kwena Maphaka, Nandre Burger, Ravindra Jadeja, Dasun Shanaka, Donovan Ferreira, Ravi Bishnoi, Ravi Singh, Sushant Mishra, Vignesh Puthur, Yash Raj Punja, Aman Rao, Brijesh Sharma, Kuldeep Sen, Adam Milne.

Best finish: Champions (2008).

Yashasvi Jaiswal

Jofra Archer

Riyan Parag

"It is important that the players enjoy the journey. You can't just focus on results: players will have ups and downs, and that doesn't define them. We want the group to enjoy playing together, take it one game at a time, and trust that results will follow.
Kumar Sangakkara, Head Coach

I don't like Impact Player rule: Axar

Curbs the growth of all-rounders, believes DC skipper

NEW DELHI, PTI

Axar Patel

An all-rounder himself, Axar Patel on Monday became the latest Indian cricketer to criticise the Impact Player rule in the IPL with a blunt "I don't like it" response before insisting that it hurts the growth of his tribe.

Rohit Sharma and Hardik Pandya have spoken against the Impact Player rule, which allows teams to substitute anyone in the playing XI with one of the five listed substitutes at any point of the match. It was introduced in 2023 and will stay until at least 2027.

In 2024, Rohit had said that he was not a fan of the strategic rule, saying it hampered the development of all-rounders in Indian cricket, while the following season Hardik said it had become too difficult pick an all-rounder in the side unless he was equally good with both bat and ball.

Indian T20 vice-captain Axar too weighed in on the subject ahead of his second season as Delhi Capitals captain.

"I don't like this rule as I'm an all-rounder myself (laughs). Earlier, we used to pick all-rounder for this role (batting and bowling). Now team management goes with a particular batter or bowler, they say why do we need an all-rounder?

"Being an all-rounder myself I don't like it but at the same time rules are rules. We have to follow them. But personally, I don't like it," said Axar.

Axar bowled only 204 balls in the last IPL season compared to 264 balls a season earlier. He said it was not because of the Impact Player rule, but a finger injury that had bothered him leading up to the IPL.

"I did not bowl a lot. It wasn't because of Impact Player. After the Champions Trophy, my spinning finger got cut. After that it got worse because of the seam of the ball. Later, it developed into a deep cut, I was not able to apply pressure and rotation on the ball.

"That is why I was bowling only when required and nursing my finger. After seven games, it became better and I bowled frequently," said Axar, who has been tasked to take Delhi Capitals to their maiden IPL title. An unprecedented title defence earlier this month has fuelled comparisons with the invincible Australian team of 2000s though its roaring success came in the ODI format. Some have dubbed the current Indian side as the greatest T20 unit ever.

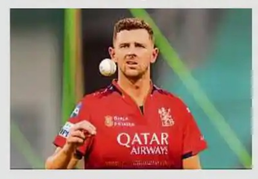
Injured Pacers' League

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS
- **Akash Deep** (lower-back) - (replaced by Saurabh Dubey)
- **Harshit Rana** (knee)
- **Matheesha Pathirana** (calf)

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS
- **Nathan Ellis** (hamstring)

RAJASTHAN ROYALS
- **Sam Curran** (groin) - (replaced by Dasun Shanaka)

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD
- **Pat Cummins** (back)
- **Jack Edwards** (foot)
- **Eshan Malinga** (shoulder)


ROYAL CHALLENGERS
- **Josh Hazlewood** (Achilles, hamstring)

DELHI CAPITALS
- **Mitchell Starc** (fitness/ workload)

ATHLETICS NATIONAL INDOORS

Big names to miss marquee meet

Animesh, Praveen and Sarvesh set to headline the inaugural event

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

Bhubaneswar's Kalinga Indoor Athletics Stadium is all set to host its first competitive event since its inauguration two years ago.

The maiden National Indoor Championships are all set to begin at the Kalinga Indoor Athletics Stadium in Bhubaneswar on Tuesday, days after the venue won the bid for the 2028 World Indoors. The stadium is also hosting the first competitive event since its inauguration in March 2024.

The two-day event, however, has failed to attract most of the major names of Indian track and field with 100 and 200m national record holder Animesh Kujur (competing in 60m), triple jump NR holder Praveen Chithravel (competing in long jump), leading high jumper Sarvesh Anil Kushare are among the few star entrants. Being placed a couple of days after the World Indoors (in Torun, Poland) is cited as the major reason behind a lack of enthusiasm among athletes, who have already started their outdoor season with the Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games qualification and preparations on their minds.

"It's exciting to see that Kalinga indoor stadium is finally hosting the nationals but there's no point in going for it now," a leading athlete told *DH* on condition of annonymity. "The tournament is neither a qualifying event for any major event nor have a big prize purse, I am focussing on the upcoming outdoor events instead to book my Asian Games and CWG berths."

Many other athletes cited similar concerns for skipping the Bhubaneswar meet with Asian Indoor Championships (February 6-8) and World Indoors are already done for the season. They instead are focussing on competing at the Indian Athletics Series 1 in Bengaluru early next month.

Athletics Federation of India (AFI) earlier wanted to host the National Indoors in January in their efforts to bid for the 2028 World and the Asian Indoors at the world-class facilities of Kalinga Indoors, which includes a Mondo track and is the only dedicated track and field indoor stadium in the country.

However, it is learnt that many of the athletes showed reluctance to start their season so early as they intended to start the season bit late with the aim to peak for Asiad and CWG.

The recently-concluded India Open 400m competition in Thiruvananthapuram saw three men's quartermilers post sub-46 timings — with Rajesh Ramesh topping the list at 45.26 — despite the absence of national record holder Vishal TK, who pulled out due to abdominal pain at the last minute. The women's individual final was interesting too with seven runners clocking sub-54. However, none of those names have entered the Indoors.

As far as the blue ribband event javelin throw is concerned, it is not part of indoor events due to safety limitations of an indoor arena. Discus throw, hammer throw and 3000m steeplechase are also not included for similar reasons.

Sneha, Yashas to quit K'taka

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

Sneha SS (left) and Yashas P

Karnataka's track athletes Sneha SS (sprinter) and Yashas P (400m hurdler) have requested for a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from Karnataka State Athletics Association to represent other states as the duo claimed they were overlooked for the state's Target Olympic Medal scheme.

"Due to a lack of adequate support from my state, I would like to request a No Objection Certificate to compete representing another state," wrote both the athletes in separate letters to KSAA on Monday.

The state government had launched the TOPS scheme last year, as per which the state will sponsor 60 elite sportspersons with Rs 10 lakh annually for three years to prepare for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

However, the duo claimed that they were not included in the list while alleging that athletes with political influence have been included.

"It is deeply disappointing to note that some athletes without significant achievements, and those with political influence, have been granted financial assistance of Rs 10 lakhs, while my genuine performance and contributions have been overlooked," said Sneha in a letter to media. 27-year-old Sneha, who won 4x100m relay silver at the Asian Athletics Championships last year, has a personal best of 11.42 seconds (in 2023) in the individual 100m while she clocked 11.55 last season.

24-year-old Yashas, on the other hand, is among the leading 400m hurdler in the country with a personal best of 49.22 seconds. He finished fifth at the 2022 Asian Games.

Karnataka women falter in the final

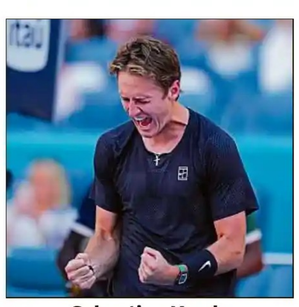
BENGALURU, DHNS: Bhavika Ahire slammed a century as Maharashtra dished out a solid batting performance to slay Karnataka by 75 runs in the final of the BCCI Women's Under-23 one-day trophy in Ranchi on Sunday.

Wicketkeeper-batter Ahire hit a fine 100-ball 109 while Ishwari Savkar scored a near run-a-ball 61 to power Maharashtra to a commanding 286/8 in 50 overs at the JSCA International Stadium Complex.

If Karnataka, who were in good form in the run-up to the final, were to scale down the target then they needed someone to score big. While Rachitha Hatwar (63) and Niki Prasad (58) slammed half-centuries, both weren't able to convert it into a century.

Worse, none of the other Karnataka were able to show the stomach for a fight as they collapsed to 211 all out in 42.3 overs. Akshaya Jadhav was the wrecker-in-chief, bagging 4/39.
Brief scores: Maharashtra: 286/8 in 50 overs (Ishwari Savkar 61, Ishwari Awasare 36, Bhavika Ahire 109; BG Tejashwini 2-57, Vandita Rao 3-61) bt Karnataka: 211 all out in 42.3 overs (Rachitha Hatwar 63, Niki Prasad 58; IM Pathare 3-43, KN Mulla 2-22, Akshaya Jadhav 4-39) by 75 runs.

Niki Prasad. X


Sebastian Korda

Korda sends Alcaraz packing; Sabalenka wins

MIAMI, AFP

Sebastian Korda stared down Carlos Alcaraz on Sunday, sending the world number one crashing out of the Miami Open third round 6-3, 5-7, 6-4.

Korda, ranked 36th in the world, notched his first victory over a world number one, sending Alcaraz to his second straight early exit in Miami following defeat to 55th-ranked Belgian David Goffin in the second round last year.

Since that defeat, Alcaraz had built a remarkable 73-6 record, including a 16-0 start to 2026 that included an Australian Open triumph to complete a career Grand Slam and a title in Dubai.

It looked like Korda had missed his chance to spring the upset when he served for the match at 5-4 in the second set and was broken at love.

World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka kept her title defence on track with a 6-4, 6-2 victory over 72nd-ranked American Caty McNally that was tougher than the score indicated.

They were on serve after exchanging four breaks in the opening set when Sabalenka gained the decisive break in the final game.

"She played really great tennis," Sabalenka said, adding that her hold for 5-4 in the opening set, in a game that went to deuce five times, was key.

Printed and published by B A Ravi on behalf of The Printers (Mysore) Private Ltd, at The Printers (Mysore) Private Ltd, Plot nos. 7-12, Kumbalgodu Industrial Area, Bengaluru - 560 074. Executive Editor: K V Subramanya (Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act). Editorial Office: 75, M.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560 001. E-mail: editor@deccanherald.co.in. Phone: 080-45557333, Editorial: 080-45557279/080-45557280, Circ: 080-45557204, Advt: 080-45557163/080-45557164. Also printed at Hubballi-Dharwad, Mangaluru, Kalaburagi, Davangere, Mysuru and Hosapete. © All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. RNI No 3608/57. Registered, Regn. No: KRNA/BGE/1027/2023-2025, posted at Bangalore PSO, Mysore Road, Bengaluru - 560 026. Website: www.printersmysore.com